

LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS



OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE

REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

JULY 1, 2017–SEPTEMBER 30, 2017

LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL MISSION

The Lead Inspector General for Overseas Contingency Operations coordinates among the Inspectors General specified under the law to:

- Develop a joint strategic plan to conduct comprehensive oversight over all aspects of the contingency operation
- Ensure independent and effective oversight of all programs and operations of the Federal government in support of the contingency operation through either joint or individual audits, inspections, and investigations
- Promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness and prevent, detect, and deter fraud, waste, and abuse
- Perform analyses to ascertain the accuracy of information provided by Federal agencies relating to obligations and expenditures, costs of programs and projects, accountability of funds, and the award and execution of major contracts, grants, and agreements
- Report quarterly and biannually to the Congress and the public on the contingency operation and activities of the Lead Inspector General

(Pursuant to sections 2, 4, and 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978)

FOREWORD

We are pleased to submit the Lead Inspector General (Lead IG) quarterly report to the United States Congress on Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR). This is our 11th quarterly report on this overseas contingency operation (OCO), discharging our individual and collective agency oversight responsibilities pursuant to sections 2, 4, and 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978. OIR is dedicated to countering the terrorist threat posed by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in Iraq, Syria, the region, and the broader international community. The U.S. strategy to defeat ISIS includes support to military operations associated with OIR, as well as diplomacy, governance, security programs and activities, and humanitarian assistance.

This report provides information on the status of OIR in sections organized by five Strategic Oversight Areas:

- Security
- Governance and Civil Society
- Stabilization
- Support to Mission
- Humanitarian Assistance

In addition, this report discusses oversight work conducted by the Lead IG Offices of Inspector General and our partner oversight agencies, as well as ongoing and future oversight work, for the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2017 ending September 30, 2017.

Working in close collaboration, we remain committed to providing comprehensive oversight and timely reporting on OIR.



Glenn A. Fine
Acting Inspector General
U.S. Department of Defense



Steve A. Linick
Inspector General
U.S. Department of State and the
Broadcasting Board of Governors



Ann Calvaresi Barr
Inspector General
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Development

On the cover: (clockwise from top left) Iraqis receiving food at an IDP camp in the vicinity of Badoush, Iraq (U.S. Army photo); an Iraqi army soldier aims down the sights of his weapon system during the combined arms training activity at Camp Taji, Iraq (U.S. Army photo); Sailors load an AIM-120C missile into an F/A-18E Super Hornet in the Arabian Gulf (U.S. Navy photo); a U.S. Marine Corps F/A-18 Hornet during a mission in support of OIR (U.S. Air Force photo); an Aviation Machinist's Mate works on an aircraft aboard the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz in the Arabian Gulf (U.S. Navy photo); Syrian Democratic Forces trainees stand in formation at their graduation ceremony in northern Syria (U.S. Army photo).

MESSAGE FROM THE LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL



Glenn A. Fine

I am pleased to present the 11th report on Operation Inherent Resolve and the U.S. strategy to defeat the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. This report summarizes the quarter's key events, and describes completed, ongoing, and planned Lead Inspector General (Lead IG) and partner agency oversight work relating to this activity.

During the quarter, Iraqi Security Forces liberated Mosul and Tal Afar in Iraq, two key ISIS strongholds, delivering a decisive defeat to the terrorist organization and leaving it in control of only about 10 percent of Iraq, mainly in the desert around al Qaim. In Syria, Coalition-backed Syrian Democratic Forces controlled roughly 75 percent of Raqqah, the "capital" of ISIS's self-proclaimed "caliphate," and by mid-October, ISIS had been ousted from the remainder of the city and forced into the desert in Dayr az Zawr province. As in Iraq, ISIS controlled only about 10 percent of Syria as of September 30, 2017.

This quarter, the three Lead IG agencies and our oversight partners completed 5 reports that impacted OIR. These reports included a DoD OIG audit of U.S. Africa Command's management of acquisition and cross-servicing agreements; a DoS OIG management assistance report on the additional measures needed at Embassy Amman in Jordan to safeguard against residential fuel loss; and DoS OIG audits of the process related to Rewards for Justice payments and the Conventional Weapons Destruction Program in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Lebanon. Thirty-one oversight projects were ongoing as of September 30, 2017.

In addition, the Fraud and Corruption Investigative Working Group, consisting of representatives from the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (the DoD OIG's investigative division), the DoS OIG, USAID OIG, the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, coordinated on 86 open investigations involving allegations of procurement or program fraud, corruption, theft, and trafficking in persons.

This quarter, along with the DoS Inspector General and the USAID Inspector General, I met with several other Federal IGs to discuss Lead IG oversight and opportunities for continued coordination.

My Lead IG colleagues and I remain committed to conducting oversight of OIR. We thank the OIG employees who engage in this important oversight work and produce this quarterly report.

Glenn A. Fine

Lead Inspector General for Operation Inherent Resolve
Acting Inspector General
U.S. Department of Defense





Syrian Democratic Forces trainees stand in formation at their graduation ceremony in northern Syria. (U.S. Army photo)

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STRATEGIC REPORTING AREAS FOR OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE

This quarterly report to Congress on Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) organizes its coverage by the five Strategic Oversight Areas (SOAs) adopted by the Lead IG agencies. These areas are Security, Governance and Civil Society, Humanitarian Assistance, Stabilization, and Support to Mission.

- **Security** is focused on determining the degree to which OIR is accomplishing its mission to defeat the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) by training, advising, and assisting the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and vetted Syrian opposition forces, and conducting counterterrorism operations.
- **Governance and Civil Society** is focused on the ability of the host-nation government, at all levels, to represent and serve its citizens.
- **Humanitarian Assistance** is focused on aid intended to save lives, alleviate suffering, and maintain human dignity during and after conflict, as well as to prevent and strengthen preparedness for such crises.
- **Stabilization** focuses on U.S. Government efforts to enable persons affected by the overseas contingency operation to return to or remain in their homes with the expectation of basic security and government and public services.
- **Support to Mission** focuses on administrative, logistical, and management efforts that enable the United States to conduct military operations, empower host-nation governance, and provide humanitarian assistance to the local population.



U.S. Army paratroopers meet their ISF partners in a recently liberated neighborhood in west Mosul. (U.S. Army photo)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report was issued pursuant to sections 2, 4, and 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978, which requires the Lead Inspector General (IG) to provide a quarterly report to Congress on overseas contingency operations. The Department of Defense IG is the designated Lead IG for Operation Inherent Resolve. The Department of State IG is the Associate Lead IG. The U.S. Agency for International Development IG also provides information for this report, and other partner oversight agencies contribute to it. The methodology for obtaining information for this report is contained in Appendix A.

SECURITY

Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) liberated Mosul and Tal Afar from ISIS this quarter, ousting the terrorist organization from its main strongholds in Iraq and forcing it further into the desert around the Iraqi border town of al Qaim.¹ The liberation of Mosul, announced on July 10, ended 9 months of grueling combat backed by Coalition air support. The victory in Tal Afar was much quicker, coming on August 31, after 8 days of fighting.² In early October, the ISF liberated the town of Hawija, just south of Kirkuk.³

These victories left ISIS in control of a fraction of its former territorial holdings in Iraq.⁴ In October, U.S. military sources estimated that ISIS controlled only 5 percent of the territory the organization controlled at the height of its power.⁵ However, pockets of ISIS resistance remained in Mosul and Tal Afar. U.S. military sources said that “sleeper cells”

remained in Mosul and that ISIS retained a robust ability to conduct insurgent attacks in Iraqi territory outside of its control.⁶ In addition, the September 25 independence referendum sponsored by the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in Iraq diverted some attention from efforts to defeat ISIS.⁷

In Syria, ISIS lost control of most of the city of Raqqah, once the seat of its “caliphate,” to U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), and on October 17, the SDF announced it had liberated the entire city.⁸ ISIS was also forced further into eastern Dayr az Zawr province, as the SDF moved south toward the provincial capital and Syrian regime and pro-regime forces moved east and north, squeezing ISIS from three directions.⁹

The military advances pushed ISIS into the desert around Abu Kamal, a Syrian border town that lies across from the Iraqi town of al Qaim. U.S. military officials said that they expected the final conventional battles against ISIS to occur in this Middle Euphrates River Valley area, which stretches across both countries.¹⁰ The fighting against ISIS has put separate U.S.-backed and Russian-backed forces in increasing proximity to each other, forcing the DoD to rely on a “de-confliction” hotline with Russia to prevent military mishaps.¹¹ For more on security issues, see the section entitled Security on page 14.

As of September 30, Coalition forces had trained more than 100,000 ISF and 8,500 SDF, as well as members of other vetted Syrian opposition groups.

TRAIN, ADVISE, ASSIST, AND EQUIP

As of September 30, Coalition forces had trained more than 100,000 ISF and 8,500 SDF troops, as well as members of other vetted Syrian opposition groups.¹² In Iraq, training focused on creating “hold” forces capable of securing territory captured from ISIS, and replenishing the ranks of forces that have suffered heavy casualties in battles against ISIS, including the Federal Police. However, while Counter Terrorism Service (CTS) recruits also suffered heavy losses during battles against ISIS, no new recruits received training

SELECTED KEY EVENTS, 7/1/2017–9/30/2017

IRAQ

<p>JULY 10 Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi declares Mosul liberated from ISIS</p>	<p>AUGUST 22 PM Abadi announces that Iraqi courts imposed sentences for 26 officials convicted of corruption</p>	<p>SEPTEMBER 12 Iraq’s parliament in Baghdad votes to reject the Iraqi Kurds’ planned referendum on independence</p>	<p>SEPTEMBER 25 Iraqi Kurds cast ballots in historic referendum</p>
<p>AUGUST 13 The DoD confirms two American soldiers, Sgt. Roshain Brooks and Spc. Allen Stigler Jr., were killed and five injured in combat operations in Iraq</p>	<p>AUGUST 27 Iraqi Security Forces liberate Tal Afar</p>	<p>SEPTEMBER 14 Insurgents wearing military uniforms shoot Shia pilgrims at restaurant in Nasiriyah and simultaneously detonate car bomb nearby, killing at least 80 people</p>	<p>SEPTEMBER 27 ISIS launches attack on Ramadi</p>



A Syrian Arab trainee loads a magazine at a marksmanship range in northern Syria. (U.S. Army photo)

from the Coalition this quarter. Similarly, during the quarter the Coalition did not train any new recruits to the Iraqi Emergency Response Division, which has come under scrutiny following allegations of torture and extra-judicial killings.¹³

In Syria, about 500 U.S. military advisers worked with the SDF to support operations against ISIS in and around Raqqah and Dayr az Zawr provinces.¹⁴ U.S. forces also trained more than 200 female volunteers recruited to the SDF, as well as members of a new 1,600-strong “hold” force called the Raqqah Internal Security Force, which will operate checkpoints, detect explosives, and identify ISIS sleeper cells.¹⁵ The Coalition maintains

SYRIA

JULY 3

SDF crosses Euphrates River to enter Raqqah from the south for the first time; SDF breaches Raqqah’s Old City walls

JULY 27

U.S. officials confirm reports that vetted Syrian opposition group Shuhada al Qaryabyn had stopped receiving training after conducting operations targeting pro-regime forces

AUGUST 29

U.S. military strikes near convoy of ISIS fighters and family members to prevent them from traveling to Dayr az Zawr province.

SEPTEMBER 14

U.S. military spokesman says SDF does not plan to enter Dayr az Zawr city

JULY 9

United States, Jordan, and Russia agree on ceasefire in southwest Syria; agreement goes into effect on July 11

AUGUST 4

ISIS issues statement indicating plans to conscript fighters for the first time directing all men in Dayr az Zawr province to report to mobilization centers

SEPTEMBER 10

SDF reaches industrial zone just east of Dayr az Zawr city

An Iraqi army soldier aims down the sights of his rifle during the combined arms training activity at Camp Taji, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo)



a training camp at At Tanf near the Iraqi and Jordanian borders. This quarter, one of the groups decided to “pursue objectives other than defeating ISIS,” prompting the Coalition to end support to that group, according to DoD officials. Some members of a second group left to join the regime. Only a small number of vetted Syrian opposition fighters had deployed to fight ISIS as of September 30, 2017.¹⁶

Along with these challenges, the DoD said that continuing tensions between Turkey and the Syrian Kurds threatened to affect the campaign against ISIS, and prompted U.S. forces to conduct patrols in northern Syria to deter Turkish or Turkish-backed forces from attacking the SDF.¹⁷ Coalition forces also came under fire from areas controlled by pro-Turkish rebels near Manbij, prompting them for the first time to return fire.¹⁸ Skirmishes between Kurds and Turkish-supported forces in the northwestern Kurdish-controlled enclave of Afrin also affected the fight against ISIS in Raqqah, as Kurds in Raqqah threatened to stop fighting to come to the aid of the Afrin Kurds.¹⁹ For more on the train, advise, assist and equip effort in Syria, see page 21.

ISIS: CURRENT STRENGTH AND FUTURE CAPABILITIES

DoD officials said that they believed ISIS leader Abu Bakr al Baghdadi was alive and located in Dayr az Zawr province.²⁰ In September, ISIS released a recording of al Baghdadi praising the organization’s fighters, which DoD officials said was likely authentic.²¹ DoD officials said that ISIS continued to attract a limited number of new recruits, even amid heavy territorial losses.²² ISIS remained in control of key oil fields in Syria and continued to benefit from illicit oil sales.²³ This quarter, ISIS showed a deadly capability to carry out insurgent and terrorist attacks in areas outside of its control, particularly in Iraq.²⁴ A Coalition spokesman predicted that ISIS would step up such activity as it continued to lose territory.²⁵ For more on ISIS strength and future capabilities, see the section entitled ISIS: Current Strength and Future Capabilities on page 23.

KEY CHALLENGES

This list is derived from Lead IG analysis of information from the DoD, DoS, USAID, United Nations (UN), and other sources of data. Information on each challenge is included within the sections of the report.

SECURITY

- Iraq's Counter Terrorism Service Needs Rebuilding
- Training Vetted Syrian Opposition at At Tanf Faces Obstacles
- Complications Arise from Backing Syrian Kurds and Maintaining Relations with Turkey
- Navigating Relations with Russia and Syrian Regime Presents Risks on a Crowded Battlefield

GOVERNANCE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

- KRG Referendum on Independence Complicates Relationship with Iraq's Central Government
- Reconciliation Remains a Critical Challenge

STABILIZATION IN IRAQ

- Demining Efforts Struggle to Meet Demands
- After 15 Months, Major Challenges Confront Fallujah's Recovery
- Concerns Remain Regarding the Detention and Handling of Suspected Members and Supporters of ISIS

STABILIZATION IN SYRIA

- Syrian Kurdish Territorial Aspirations Increase Potential for Conflict with Syrian Regime
- Removing Explosive Remnants of War Remains a Major Task
- Human Rights Violations and the Use of Child Soldiers Raise Concerns

SUPPORT TO MISSION

- Continuing Resolution Complicates OIR Funding
- Trafficking in Persons Remains a Concern for U.S. Contractors in OIR

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

- Syrian IDPs Faced Obstacles at Screening Sites and Camps
- HTS Control in Idlib Forces Reliance on Third-party Monitoring

Operation Pacific Eagle–Philippines and Global Efforts to Combat ISIS Affiliates

ISIS-inspired or ISIS-affiliated organizations operated in at least 10 countries across the Middle East, Africa, and Asia during the quarter.²⁶ On September 5, Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis designated the fight against ISIS-affiliated groups in the Philippines an overseas contingency operation, called Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines.²⁷ This report highlights significant events against ISIS affiliates in this new overseas contingency operation, as well as events involving countering ISIS-inspired or ISIS-affiliated groups in Egypt and Libya, and along the Niger-Mali border. For more on these groups and efforts to combat them in these five countries, see the section entitled ISIS: Global Reach on page 26.

SYRIAN CIVIL WAR

Negotiations to de-escalate Syria’s 6-year-old civil war occurred on 5 separate tracks this quarter in Astana, Geneva, Amman, Cairo, and New York, with varying degrees of progress. Diplomats sought to bring about ceasefires in Homs province and in southern Syria, clarify the boundaries of four “de-escalation zones,” and determine broad outlines of the diplomatic efforts needed to end the war and defeat both ISIS and the al Qaeda affiliate Nusrah Front, among other issues.²⁸

Against this diplomatic backdrop, Syrian regime and pro-regime forces, backed by Russia, fought Syrian opposition groups and ISIS, while Coalition-backed forces continued the effort to liberate Raqqah and squeeze ISIS in Dayr az Zawr province. In northwestern Syria, skirmishes between Turkish-backed forces and Syrian Kurds spiked, with increased Russian involvement there. The al Qaeda-dominated Hayat Tahrir al Sham (HTS) took control of Idlib province and much of the provinces of Aleppo and Hama, deepening Russian involvement in those areas as well, as it increased airstrikes against HTS positions in support of the Syrian regime. Syrian regime and pro-regime forces continued to take territory from ISIS in Dayr az Zawr.²⁹ For more detail on diplomatic efforts and ground fighting, see the section entitled Syrian Civil War on page 30.

GOVERNANCE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

On September 25, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) held a non-binding referendum on an independent Kurdistan. The vote, which Iraq’s central government condemned as “illegal,” and which the United States opposed and viewed as destabilizing, favored independence by a broad majority, and resulted in a political and military response from Iraq. As of October 17, Iraqi forces had retaken oil-rich Kirkuk from Kurdish control, with little fighting, and according to media reports, the Kurds had also withdrawn from other disputed areas in northern and eastern Iraq. The KRG retained control over the three northern provinces which, under the Iraqi constitution, constitute the autonomous Iraqi Kurdish Region. Prime Minister Abadi called for dialogue for a “national partnership,

Negotiations to de-escalate Syria’s 6-year-old civil war occurred on 5 separate tracks this quarter in Astana, Geneva, Amman, Cairo, and New York, with varying degrees of progress.



Brett McGurk, the Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS; Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis; and U.S. Army LTG Stephen Townsend, the commander of CJTF-OIR speak with the press during a visit to Baghdad, Iraq (DoD photo)

based on the constitution.”³⁰ For more on Kurdish politics and populations across the Middle East as well as the fallout from the KRG referendum, see page 40.

In July, Prime Minister Abadi acknowledged the occurrence of human rights violations by some Iraqi forces during military operations to defeat ISIS. According to media reports, Iraqi forces were holding 1,400 family members of suspected ISIS fighters in a camp near Mosul.³¹

Corruption remained a widespread problem in Iraq. However, according to regional media reports, in August, the Iraqi courts sentenced 26 former officials to jail terms for corruption offenses, including a 15-year sentence for the former Director of Transparency and Corruption Prevention at the Integrity Commission, Iraq’s anti-corruption body.³² Economic challenges persisted, such as depressed oil prices, security concerns regarding oil production, and the need to develop non-oil sectors of the economy. Nevertheless, Iraq completed a \$1 billion international bond sale, indicating some confidence in the Iraqi economy.³³ In addition, the International Monetary Fund released approximately \$824 million to the Iraq government based on its review of Iraqi progress under the terms of its arrangement for financing.³⁴

The DoS reported that the United States continued to provide financial and capacity-building support to Syrian efforts to establish civil society in areas outside the influence of either the regime of President Bashar al Assad or its allies. With U.S. support, local and provincial councils have undertaken some beneficial activities, such as resuming education and conducting community clean-up campaigns.³⁵

The DoS also reported that it continued to provide non-lethal assistance to vetted Syrian opposition forces (food, medical kits, and winterization gear).³⁶ As in Iraq, the future of Kurdish regions in Syria presented a continuing challenge. Syria’s foreign minister recently signaled that the regime would negotiate with the Kurds over “some form of self-administration” within Syria after the fight against ISIS had concluded.³⁷ For more on these U.S. efforts, see the Governance and Civil Society section on page 32.

An improvised ISIS barricade in a recently liberated neighborhood of Mosul. (U.S. Army photo)



STABILIZATION

In Iraq, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and its Funding Facility for Stabilization reported approximately 1,100 projects underway at the end of the quarter, focused on restoring basic services and employment in areas liberated from ISIS. At the same time, the DoS and USAID supported stabilization planning and efforts for Mosul, Tal Afar, and other towns liberated or expected to be liberated from ISIS.³⁸

In Mosul, the UNDP addressed urgent infrastructure projects, including rehabilitating water services, reinstating electrical, sewage and road systems, and pre-positioning critical medical equipment.³⁹ Nearly 100,000 people from west Mosul and villages on the western bank of the Tigris had returned to their homes by September 1. However, Mosul's Old City remained deserted because of its extensive destruction. The UN estimated that more than 11 million tons of debris, mostly in and around the Old City, needed removal.⁴⁰

In Syria, U.S. stabilization efforts remained complicated by the ongoing fighting, the lack of a central Syrian government with diplomatic relations with the United States and the Coalition, and armed conflicts between the Syrian regime and various factions vying for control. Additional complications for U.S. efforts included the influence of other countries on events inside Syria, and the absence of a UN stabilization coordinator. However, the United States and the Coalition have engaged as much as possible in stabilization efforts, including for Raqqah.⁴¹ For more on these U.S. efforts, see the Stabilization section on page 34.

SUPPORT TO MISSION

The Lead IG “support to mission” Strategic Oversight Area (SOA) concerns administrative, logistical, and management efforts that enable the United States to conduct military operations, empower host-nation governance, and provide humanitarian assistance to the local population. For example, this SOA can include the security of U.S. personnel and property on U.S. installations, or grant and contract management.



Residents in west Mosul open their shop. (U.S. Army photo)

Although the number of people returning to Mosul increased during the quarter, the extensive presence of explosive remnants of war, particularly in west Mosul, as well as a lack of job opportunities, forced some to return to IDP camps.

This section of the report addresses congressional funding for OIR. The Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Federal Government budget includes \$13.0 billion in requested OIR funding for the DoD.⁴² The FY 2018 request for the DoS and USAID includes \$12 billion in overseas contingency operations (OCO) funding, of which \$5.6 billion would support efforts to defeat ISIS and stabilize areas liberated from the terrorist organization.⁴³ For more on these activities, see the section entitled Support to Mission on page 42.

In addition to the funding discussion, the Lead IG focused on the international problem of trafficking in persons, and the U.S. Government's efforts to combat this illicit practice. The OIR areas of operation present particular trafficking risks because of the labor population, the practices in the relevant countries, and lack of U.S. oversight of the activities of subcontractors working on Federal projects.⁴⁴ For more on the efforts to prevent U.S. contractors and companies from contributing to this international criminal problem, see the Lead IG Focus: Combating Trafficking in Persons in U.S. Support Contracts Overseas on page 45.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

The humanitarian response in Iraq focused this quarter on providing aid to internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Mosul, Tal Afar, and Hawija, and to people returning to Mosul.⁴⁵ USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance and Office of Food for Peace, as well as the DoS's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, supported IDPs from these areas, and people returning to their area of origin.⁴⁶ Although the number of people returning to Mosul increased during the quarter, the extensive presence of explosive remnants of war, particularly in west Mosul, as well as a lack of job opportunities, forced some to return to IDP camps.⁴⁷

In Syria, the humanitarian response centered on the northeast of the country, where aid workers provided shelter and humanitarian supplies to IDPs fleeing fighting as the SDF's advanced into Raqqah and the Syrian regime advanced into Dayr az Zawr.⁴⁸ In northwest Syria, HTS, which is dominated by the Syrian al Qaeda affiliate al Nusrah Front, captured key areas of Idlib province, temporarily halting transport of humanitarian aid supplies into

the province and creating new challenges for humanitarian aid providers.⁴⁹ For more on this topic, see the section entitled Humanitarian Assistance on page 51.

LEAD IG OVERSIGHT

During this quarter, the Lead IG agencies held several high-level meetings with oversight partners, policy officials, and international agencies, including five United Nations agencies. During these meetings, the Lead IG agencies discussed military, governance, and humanitarian aid activities related to OIR, and shared information about the Lead IG model with new audiences.

The Southwest Asia Joint Planning Group held its 39th meeting, at which the Director of the Strategic Operational Planning Directorate at the National Counterterrorism Center discussed its role in defeating ISIS.

On October 1, 2017, the Lead IG issued the *FY 2018 Comprehensive Oversight Plan for Overseas Contingency Operations*, which included the *FY 2018 Joint Strategic Oversight Plan for Operation Inherent Resolve*. The 2018 oversight plan updated the SOAs for OIR-related projects. The new categories are Security, Governance and Civil Society, Humanitarian Assistance, Stabilization, and Support to Mission.

The Lead IG agencies and their partners released five reports from July 1, 2017, through September 30, 2017, relating directly or in part to oversight of OIR. Table 1 lists the released reports by agency.

Table 1.

Oversight Reports Issued this Quarter, as of September 30, 2017

Project	Release Date
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>U.S. Africa Command's Management of Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreements</i> (DODIG-2017-121)	September 21, 2017
DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Managment Assistance Report: Additional Measures Needed at Embassy Amman to Safeguard Against Residential Fuel Loss</i> (AUD-MERO-17-50)	July 31, 2017
<i>Audit of the Process to Approve, Disburse, and Report Rewards for Justice Payments</i> (AUD-SI-17-48)	August 2, 2017
<i>Audit of the Conventional Weapons Destruction Program in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Lebanon</i> (AUD-MERO-17-49)	August 9, 2017
DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Terrorist Financing/Money Laundering: FinCEN's 314 Information Sharing Programs are Useful But Need FinCEN's Attention</i> (OIG-17-055)	September 18, 2017



500-hour phase maintenance cycle of the AH-64E Apache “Guardian” at Camp Taji Military Complex, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo)

HOTLINE ACTIVITY

Each Lead IG agency maintains its own hotline to receive complaints and contacts specific to its agency. The OIGs’ hotlines provide a confidential, reliable means for individuals to report violations of law, rule, or regulation; mismanagement; gross waste of funds; and abuse of authority for independent review. During this quarter, the Lead IG hotline investigator received and coordinated numerous complaints, which resulted in the opening of 81 cases. The cases were referred within the DoD OIG, the Service IG entities, and other Lead IG agencies as appropriate.

REPORT STRUCTURE

This report examines OIR events and oversight in three chapters:

- The status of OIR, with information organized in section aligned with five Strategic Oversight Areas adopted by the Lead IG;
- Completed Oversight Activities; and
- Ongoing and Planned Oversight Activities.

METHODOLOGY

To fulfill the congressional mandate to produce a quarterly report to Congress on OIR, the Lead IG agencies gather data and information from Federal agencies and open sources, including congressional testimonies, press conferences, academic analyses, and media reports. The source of information is provided in endnotes or notes to tables and figures. Except for Lead IG and oversight partner agency audits, inspections, evaluations, or investigations discussed in this report, the Lead IG agencies have not independently verified and assessed all the data included in this report. The humanitarian assistance section is based on public UN documents and information provided by USAID and DoS.



DANGER

CHAIR

PEREZ

REMOVE BEFORE FLIGHT



Sailors load an AIM-120C missile into an F/A-18E Super Hornet in the Arabian Gulf. (U.S. Navy photo)

OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE

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U.S. Army paratroopers engage ISIS militants with artillery fire in support of Iraqi and Peshmerga fighters in Mosul. (U.S. Army Photo)



SECURITY

IRAQ: Operations against ISIS

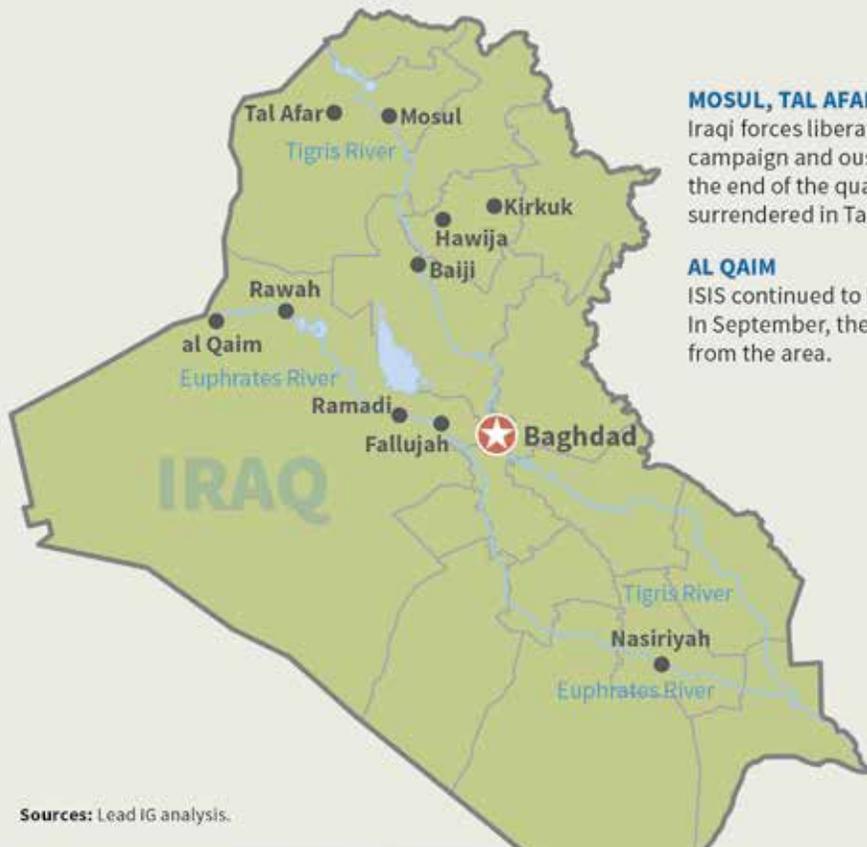
IRAQI SECURITY FORCES LIBERATE MOSUL AND TAL AFAR

The ISF drove ISIS from two major strongholds this quarter, unseating the extremist group from its base in Mosul on July 10 and from the city of Tal Afar on August 31.¹ However, the ISF, supported by U.S. and Coalition advisers and aircraft, sustained heavy casualties—including 1,200-1,500 killed and 8,000 wounded—during the 9-month battle for Mosul, which relied heavily on the Iraqi Counter Terrorism Service (CTS) and Federal Police dispatched to the front lines. The Iraqi Army, Iraqi Air Force, Kurdish Peshmerga, and Shia-dominated Popular Mobilization Forces also participated.² After the battle, ISIS fighters remained in Mosul with sporadic fighting continuing into early August, and DoD officials and Iraqi civilians expressed concerns about ISIS cells remaining in Mosul.³ Speaking in Baghdad in late August, Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis said “pockets of enemy and diehards and sleepers” remained in the city.⁴

Human rights groups asserted that the ISF held about 1,400 family members of ISIS foreign fighters without due process in a desert camp near Mosul.⁵ For more information on this allegation, see the Governance and Civil Society section on page 33.

Compared to the battle for Mosul, the fighting in Tal Afar concluded quickly—in 8 days—which U.S. military spokesmen attributed to the absence of civilians in the city, fewer ISIS fighters than originally estimated, and the involvement of Popular Mobilization Forces, which had surrounded Tal Afar several months before the ground assault began.⁶ Iraqi forces deliberately left an escape route for ISIS fighters to flee Tal Afar, according to an Iraqi CTS commander. He said that Iraqi forces had “avoided destroying the city” by opening “a loophole for terrorists to escape.” Hundreds of ISIS fighters who fled using this route later surrendered to Kurdish Peshmerga forces outside of the city.⁷

IRAQ: AREAS OF U.S. AND COALITION MILITARY OPERATIONS



Sources: Lead IG analysis.

MOSUL, TAL AFAR, AND HAWIJA

Iraqi forces liberated Mosul on July 10 after a 9-month campaign and ousted ISIS from Tal Afar and Hawija by the end of the quarter. More than 1,500 ISIS fighters surrendered in Tal Afar and Hawija.

AL QAIM

ISIS continued to hold territory around al Qaim in Iraq. In September, the ISF launched operations to oust ISIS from the area.

NASIRIYAH

ISIS launched one of its largest and most complex insurgent attacks on September 14 in the predominantly Shia city of Nasiriyah, killing more than 80 people in a bombing and shooting attack and demonstrating its ability to strike targets in areas outside its control.

ISIS OUSTED FROM HAWIJA, FIGHTING CONTINUES IN ANBAR PROVINCE, AND INSURGENT ACTIVITY TAKES A TOLL

By September 30, the ISF had successfully liberated more than 100 villages around Hawija and in early October, Coalition and Iraqi sources publicly announced the defeat of ISIS in the Hawija area.⁸ ISIS forces attacked Iraqi troops but were unable to disrupt Coalition and ISF offensive operations to retake Hawija.⁹ In Anbar province, ISIS lost control of the towns of Akashat and Anah and was defending Rawah near al Qaim as the quarter ended.¹⁰ As security forces ousted ISIS from many urban centers, U.S. military commanders said Iraqi troops were transitioning from urban combat to counterterrorism to retake smaller and more rural remaining ISIS havens and counter ISIS terrorism and insurgent activity.¹¹

As ISIS lost territory, it increased its insurgent attacks across Iraq, and demonstrated a continued ability to conduct attacks in territories where it has been largely defeated and where it does not appear to have significant popular support. For example, on September 14, ISIS launched a deadly attack in the predominantly Shia southern city of Nasiriyah, killing 84 people.¹² ISIS also launched an attack on Ramadi, the capital of Anbar province, temporarily seizing parts of the Anbar University campus.¹³ Other ISIS attacks this quarter included an August 28 car bombing that killed 12 and wounded 28 in

Iraqi Federal
Police stand
guard in Mosul.
(U.S. Army photo)



a predominately Shia district of Baghdad, and a September 2 attack on a power plant in Samarra that killed 4 police officers and 3 workers and wounded 13 others.¹⁴ On August 3, a Coalition spokesman stated that as the U.S. and Coalition partners continue to “take away ISIS territory and not allow them to conduct large-scale attacks ... we do fully expect that they will devolve back into an insurgent-type organization.”¹⁵

IRAQ: TRAIN, ADVISE, ASSIST, AND EQUIP MISSION

From 2015 to September 30, 2017, the Coalition trained more than 100,000 ISF, including 43,000 Iraqi Army, nearly 14,000 local and federal police, 6,800 border security guards, 21,000 Kurdish Peshmerga, more than 5,000 CTS members, 3,000 members of the Emergency Response Division, and 10,600 tribal mobilization forces.¹⁶ The Coalition’s train, advise, assist, and equip efforts have been focused on building up the ability of the ISF to maintain logistics, sustain combat systems and ammunition supplies, collect and analyze intelligence, and share information.¹⁷ A major focus has been on the CTS and Federal Police, which took heavy losses in battles with ISIS. The Emergency Response Division came under scrutiny following allegations that some members of the unit had engaged in torture and extra-judicial killings.¹⁸

A senior Coalition commander stated that Iraqi forces “are not ready for self-sustainment yet from a security perspective,” and noted that in future training efforts, the Coalition would “transition from building hardcore combat capability to moving towards giving the Iraqis training and resources to help them become self-sustaining.”¹⁹ A DoD spokesperson stated, “We clearly see a shift in emphasis toward police and wide-area security and counterterrorism-type training as we see ISIS devolve into an insurgency.”²⁰

IRAQ’S COUNTER TERRORISM SERVICE AND FEDERAL POLICE SUSTAIN HEAVY LOSSES

Despite heavy losses and the DoD’s stated goal of rebuilding the Iraqi CTS, the DoD reported that it had not yet identified the final 1,000 recruits drawn from a recruiting drive

earlier this year that will attend training for the service.²¹ In May, more than 600 CTS soldiers graduated from a training academy.²² However, the CTS suffered 40 percent losses during the fighting in Mosul.²³ The high casualties forced the Coalition and Iraq's central government to focus on replenishing CTS ranks amid ongoing fighting against ISIS while also transitioning the force from an elite infantry division to a counterterrorism force capable of operating against insurgents.²⁴

Iraq's Federal Police also deployed to the front lines in the fight against ISIS and sustained high casualties.²⁵ However, the DoD reported that the Coalition trained only 24 Federal Police this quarter.²⁶ As operations against ISIS wind down, the Coalition planned to transition the Federal Police from a combat force to a hold force, which will support stability operations. This quarter, the DoD OIG announced plans to evaluate the Iraqi Police Hold Force.²⁷

IRAQ'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE DIVISION ACCUSED OF TORTURE; DOD REPORTS NONE WERE TRAINED THIS QUARTER

In August, Prime Minister Abadi acknowledged that some members of the Emergency Response Division (ERD), a paramilitary unit operating under the Iraqi Ministry of Interior, had committed abuses against civilians in Mosul.²⁸ During the operation in Mosul, allegations against some members of the unit emerged after a freelance photographer embedded with the ERD documented evidence of apparent torture and extra-judicial killings committed by members of this security force.²⁹ However, the ERD continued to play a role in Mosul security despite such allegations of misconduct and the division was also involved in fighting ISIS in Tal Afar.³⁰

In August, Prime Minister Abadi acknowledged that some members of the ERD, a paramilitary unit operating under the Iraqi Ministry of Interior, had committed abuses against civilians in Mosul.

Coalition officials stated that they report all allegations of ISF misconduct to the Iraqi government, and that Coalition representatives regularly meet with Iraqi counterparts to discuss the importance of adhering to the law of armed conflict.³¹ Representatives of the Iraqi Ministries of Defense and Interior stated that an investigation into the alleged misconduct by the ERD was ongoing, and that some members of the force had been suspended from duty.³²

The DoD reported that 3,000 ERD personnel had been trained by the Coalition since January 2015, including more than 900 trained last quarter. This quarter, officials reported no training of ERD recruits. The DoD also reported that the ERD, as well as other ISF units, were vetted through a process that involved obtaining the unit commander's biographical data and other pieces of information used to ensure compliance with U.S. human rights laws referred to as the "Leahy Laws." These laws prohibit the DoD from providing military assistance to foreign military units when there is credible information that the unit has committed gross violations of human rights.³³ The DoD reported that if vetted Iraqi military forces commit gross human rights violations, they will be prohibited from receiving assistance or training until the Iraqi government has taken all necessary corrective steps to remedy the situation.³⁴

ASSESSING IRAQI MILITARY CAPABILITIES

While Coalition officials stated that there were no significant gaps in the current advise and assist mission, they noted that the limited size of Coalition advise and assist teams and their current security posture prevented independent assessments of Iraqi military capabilities.³⁵ According to the DoD, effective translation capability remains the biggest challenge for Coalition officials communicating with Iraqi officers about the effectiveness and capabilities of their units.³⁶

SYRIA: Operations against ISIS

According to the DoD, the United States deploys about 500 military advisers to Syria, mainly to provide the Kurdish-led SDF with training, equipment, supplies, stipends, and construction of training and associated facilities.³⁷ The SDF, which controls areas of northeastern Syria including Hasakah and Raqqah provinces and northern Dayr az Zawr province, has led the fight against ISIS in those areas.³⁸

U.S.-BACKED SYRIAN DEMOCRATIC FORCES LIBERATE MUCH OF RAQQAH FROM ISIS

By the end of September, the SDF had surrounded most of Raqqah and liberated more than 75 percent of the city from ISIS.³⁹ On October 17, the SDF announced that it had liberated the entire city.⁴⁰ The U.S. military said in early October that remaining ISIS fighters were low on supplies, and that captured fighters had displayed signs of malnourishment.⁴¹

In early September, the SDF captured a U.S. citizen allegedly fighting for ISIS in Syria. According to U.S. military officials, the SDF transferred the citizen to U.S. custody, where authorities detained him as a “known enemy combatant,” the first American citizen detained under this designation since 2006. The U.S. military did not release details about the man’s identity.⁴²

THE SDF’S KURDISH ORIGINS REVEALED, EXACERBATING TENSIONS WITH TURKEY

On July 21, General Raymond Thomas, Commander of U.S. Special Operations Command, told an audience gathered at the Aspen Institute that in 2015 the U.S. military had urged the Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG) militia fighting ISIS in Syria to change its “brand” to distance itself from Kurds in Turkey. “What do you want to call yourselves besides the YPG?” General Thomas recounted U.S. military advisers saying to YPG militia leaders. “Within about a day’s notice, they declared that they were the Syrian Democratic Forces,” he said. “I thought it was a stroke of brilliance to put ‘democracy’ in [the name] somewhere.”⁴³

In revealing the SDF’s origins, General Thomas appeared to confirm Turkey’s allegations that the U.S.-backed organization was essentially the YPG by another name.⁴⁴ Turkey considers the YPG a terrorist organization with ties to the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK), a group designated by the United States and Turkey as a terrorist organization that for decades has waged a violent campaign for autonomy in eastern Turkey. U.S. support for the SDF has been a source of tension between the United States and Turkey.⁴⁵

SYRIA: AREAS OF U.S. AND COALITION MILITARY OPERATIONS

RAQQAH

By the end of the quarter, the SDF successfully liberated more than 75% of Raqqah, and pushed the remaining ISIS fighters into a tight perimeter within the city; in mid-October the SDF took control of the entire city.

DAYR AZ ZAWR

ISIS came under pressure in both Dayr az Zawr province and city from the SDF and the Coalition and from the Syrian regime and its allies. As a result, ISIS steadily withdrew east, but advances against the group were complicated by the multiplicity of actors operating on the ground and in the air.

NOTE: The United States and Coalition are not involved in the civil war. Combat between Syrian regime forces and their allies against opposition fighters and ISIS occurs throughout Syria.



Sources: Lead IG analysis.

Following the name change, which occurred in October 2015, the SDF became an umbrella organization containing the YPG and Syrian Arab groups, although the leadership remained largely YPG. The U.S. military continually emphasized that the SDF included both YPG fighters and Arab fighters and insisted that the U.S. military gave direct support only to the Arab elements of the force.⁴⁶ Turkey, however, continued to accuse the United States of aiding the YPG.⁴⁷

In May 2017, U.S. officials announced that they had begun directly arming the YPG.⁴⁸ U.S. backing of the SDF—including arms supplied directly to the YPG—continued to strain the United States' bilateral relationship with Turkey this quarter and to provoke heated responses from Turkish officials.⁴⁹

Against the backdrop of U.S.-Turkish disagreement over the YPG, the U.S. military has been patrolling northern Syria in areas along the border with Turkey to deter attacks on the SDF from either Turkey or Turkish-backed Syrian rebels.⁵⁰ During the patrols, U.S. forces have come under fire from unknown groups in areas controlled by pro-Turkish rebels near Manbij, and on August 29, U.S. forces returned fire for the first time.⁵¹ There were no reports of U.S. casualties or damage to equipment. U.S. troops moved to protected positions to de-escalate the conflict, but have continued patrols with the SDF.⁵² Turkish-backed rebels claimed to have taken fire from SDF positions nearby and said that they were unaware of the presence of Coalition forces.⁵³ The skirmish led U.S. officials to communicate directly with Turkey to lower tensions and address the threats to U.S. forces in Syria.⁵⁴

Separately, Turkish military incursions in northwestern Syria threatened to affect OIR by distracting the YPG from the fight against ISIS in Raqqah, according to the DoD.⁵⁵ In July, the SDF said its fighters would quit battling ISIS and instead aid fellow Kurds in the Kurdish-controlled enclave of Afrin—some 130 miles from Raqqah—if Turkey continued to send reinforcements into areas north of Aleppo.⁵⁶ According to a Syrian monitoring group, in mid-July, Turkish-backed rebels and SDF clashed, leaving at least 15 rebels dead.⁵⁷

ISIS LOSES GROUND IN DAYR AZ ZAWR PROVINCE

With ISIS control in Raqqah waning, Dayr az Zawr province remained the last major ISIS stronghold in Syria. This quarter, ISIS's center of gravity slowly moved east toward the Iraqi border as it came under pressure from the United States, the Coalition, and the SDF from the northwest and Russian and pro-Syrian regime forces from the west and south. The DoD reported, however, that ISIS in Dayr az Zawr province continued to defend its territory, bolster its defenses, and identify weaknesses in enemy forces.⁵⁸ Syrian observers to the conflict estimated that ISIS remained in control of roughly 75 percent of the province.⁵⁹

The military movements in Dayr az Zawr forced the SDF, backed by Coalition air power, to operate in increasingly close proximity to about 10,000 Hezbollah and Iraqi Shia fighters, supported by Russian air power, particularly around the provincial capital.⁶⁰ The crowded battlefield has resulted in some apparently unintended casualties. On September 16, U.S. and SDF forces accused Russia of wounding several SDF fighters during an airstrike on SDF units near Dayr az Zawr city while Coalition advisers were present.⁶¹ Additionally, the SDF accused Russia of killing and wounding several fighters in another strike on September 25.⁶²

Friction with Russia intensified after U.S. airplanes destroyed a bridge in Dayr az Zawr on August 29 to prevent a convoy of ISIS fighters and their families from reaching sanctuary in the province. The convoy was traveling from the Lebanese border after ISIS struck a deal with the Lebanese government and Hezbollah to give the fighters safe passage in return for the bodies of nine Lebanese soldiers.⁶³ Iraqi officials, including Prime Minister Abadi, expressed frustration that Syrian and Lebanese forces would agree to bus ISIS fighters and their family members to the Iraqi border.⁶⁴ A DoD spokesman stated that “ISIS is a global threat, and relocating terrorists from one place to another is not a lasting solution.”⁶⁵ Coalition forces claimed to have struck 85 ISIS fighters and 40 vehicles around the convoy.⁶⁶

To avoid confrontations in air operations, Coalition officials rely on a hotline to communicate with Russia, arranging de-confliction within predetermined limits as many as 15 times per day.⁶⁷ In September, U.S. and Russian military leaders met to share information on the locations of their forces. According to the DoD, Coalition policy and the activity of Coalition-backed forces have not been affected by the presence of Russian and pro-regime forces in Dayr az Zawr. However, the DoD characterized Russian and Syrian regime air and artillery strikes on Coalition partners' front lines as provocative, and said they threatened the progress of the campaign to defeat ISIS and also put the lives of Coalition and Coalition-backed forces at risk.⁶⁸

Friction with Russia intensified after U.S. airplanes destroyed a bridge in Dayr az Zawr on August 29 to prevent a convoy of ISIS fighters and their families from reaching sanctuary in the province.

CIVILIAN CASUALTIES IN RAQQAH

Reports of increasing civilian casualties from Coalition airstrikes in Raqqah caused concern this quarter. U.S. military leaders attributed the increase in civilian casualties to the increased intensity of the fighting.⁶⁹ However, the high numbers prompted UN officials to call for a halt to the air campaign over Raqqah. Coalition officials said that any pause in airstrikes would aid ISIS and allow it to increase its use of human shields.⁷⁰

SYRIA: Train, Advise, Assist, and Equip Mission

TRAINING THE SDF, A NEW RAQQAH SECURITY FORCE AND VETTED SYRIAN OPPOSITION GROUPS AT THE AT TANF CAMP

U.S. forces provide training, equipment, supplies, stipends, construction of training and associated facilities, and sustainment to SDF forces working to counter ISIS.⁷¹ The Coalition also continued to train, advise, assist, and equip the SDF this quarter.⁷² As of September 2017, the Coalition has trained 8,500 SDF troops in Syria, and in 2017 delivered weapons, ammunition, and more than 400 vehicles and personal equipment to more than 40,000 SDF troops.⁷³ Additionally, in mid-August more than 200 female volunteers graduated from a Coalition training course and joined the SDF to fight in Raqqah.⁷⁴

U.S. forces also provided training to recruits of the Raqqah Internal Security Force, a roughly 1,600-strong “overwhelmingly Arab” force to be deployed to conduct hold operations, such as operating checkpoints, identifying ISIS sleeper cells, and detecting explosives following ISIS’s anticipated defeat there. This quarter, nearly 500 trainees graduated from the program.⁷⁵

American and Coalition special forces have been training vetted Syrian opposition groups at a desert camp near At Tanf along the border with Iraq and Jordan. In July, U.S. military officials said one of the vetted groups—Shuhada al-Qaryatayn—conducted operations that

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

■ ISIS DEFEATED IN MOSUL, TAL AFAR, AND HAWIJA

On July 10, Prime Minister Haider al Abadi declared Mosul liberated from ISIS, following defeat of ISIS fighters in west Mosul. U.S. military officials said pockets of ISIS resistance remained in the city. Following the victory in Mosul, the ISF moved to the ISIS stronghold of Tal Afar and declared victory over ISIS there after 8 days of fighting.⁷⁶ In early October, the ISF liberated Hawija, south of Kirkuk.⁷⁷

■ SDF ADVANCED AGAINST ISIS IN RAQQAH

By the end of September, the SDF had captured most of the Syrian city of Raqqah during intense fighting against ISIS, and on October 17, the SDF announced the liberation of all of Raqqah.⁷⁸

■ ISIS SQUEEZED IN DAYR AZ ZAWR

SDF military operations and separate operations by Syrian regime and pro-Syrian regime forces pushed ISIS to the east and north in Dayr az Zawr province, a desert area along the Iraqi border that U.S. military officials say will be where the final battles against ISIS are likely to take place.⁷⁹ DoD officials said ISIS continued to defend its territory, while local Syrian observers estimated that ISIS controlled roughly 75 percent of the province at the end of the September.⁸⁰

were “not focused on the counter-ISIS fight,” but instead reportedly targeted pro-regime forces. U.S. policy restricts DoD training and operations to the counter-ISIS mission only. On August 3, a DoD spokesman confirmed that the group had returned heavy equipment and weaponry provided by the DoD to fight ISIS, but that the group had been allowed to keep small arms and light vehicles.⁸¹

ISIS: Current Strength and Future Capabilities in Iraq and Syria

ISIS has lost 95 percent of the territory it once held in Iraq, and at the end of September controlled 10 percent of Iraqi territory.⁸² Experts estimate that ISIS also controls only 10 percent of Syria, much of it sparsely inhabited desert.⁸³ Despite these setbacks, ISIS continued to fight and conduct complex surprise attacks in both opposition-held and government-held territory.⁸⁴

KEY CHALLENGES

■ IRAQ’S COUNTER TERRORISM SERVICE NEEDS REBUILDING

The high casualty rate suffered by the elite Counter Terrorism Service (CTS) has put pressure on the ISF to replenish its ranks. At the same time, Iraq expects to transform the CTS’s primary mission from combat to counterterrorism, and plans to train recruits toward this end.⁸⁵ Iraq’s government made progress toward rebuilding the CTS, launching an online recruitment drive in May to attract volunteers for 1,000 positions in a joint U.S.-Iraqi training academy.⁸⁶ In July, about 500 new recruits joined CTS troops in battle. The DoD plans to help double the force strength of the CTS to 20,000 personnel over the next 3 fiscal years.⁸⁷ However, DoD officials said it takes more than a year to provide enough training to “build a CTS fighter,” and only about 2,000 troops graduate from a training academy annually.⁸⁸

■ TRAINING VETTED SYRIAN OPPOSITION AT AT TANF FACES OBSTACLES

U.S. and Coalition forces faced challenges deploying vetted Syrian opposition groups trained at At Tanf to fight ISIS. One group chose instead to fight pro-Syrian regime forces in southern Syria; some members of another defected to join the regime.⁸⁹ The DoD reported that U.S. Coalition forces had stopped training vetted Syrian opposition groups at At Tanf in July, but Coalition spokesmen said they were continuing to “work” with one group, including patrolling the area around At Tanf.⁹⁰ Most of the fighters from the group are from Dayr az Zawr province and are being prepared for opportunities to fight ISIS there, a Coalition spokesman said.⁹¹

■ COMPLICATIONS ARISE FROM BACKING SYRIAN KURDS AND MAINTAINING RELATIONS WITH TURKEY

In northern Syria, U.S. forces continued to arm the SDF, including Kurdish YPG elements, while attempting to reassure Turkey that the YPG would use those arms solely to fight ISIS amid escalating tensions between the two U.S. allies. In July, Turkey conducted cross-border artillery attacks and deployed military assets near the Kurdish enclave of Afrin, provoking the SDF in Raqqah to threaten to quit fighting ISIS to aid their brethren in the western Kurdish enclave.⁹² Continuing tension between Turkey and the Syrian Kurds has also prompted U.S. forces to conduct overt patrols in northern Syria with the SDF to deter conflict and provide protection.⁹³

■ NAVIGATING RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA AND SYRIAN REGIME PRESENTS RISKS ON A CROWDED BATTLEFIELD

In eastern Syria, U.S.- and Coalition-backed forces operated in increasingly close proximity to an array of forces, particularly in Dayr az Zawr province, resulting in a crowded battlefield that has prompted the U.S. military to rely on a “de-confliction” hotline with Russia to prevent operational mishaps. In mid-September, the U.S. military tried to determine whether a Russian strike on the SDF was an error or a deliberate attack.⁹⁴ As the campaign against ISIS continues, this cramped battlefield requires U.S. and partner forces to work carefully to avoid military confrontations with Russian and pro-regime forces operating in the same area.⁹⁵



U.S. Army paratroopers prepare a military armored tactical vehicle convoy in support of their advise and assist mission to Iraqi security forces maneuvering to liberate Tal Afar from ISIS in northern Iraq. (U.S. Army photo)

In Syria, ISIS continued to hold territory in Dayr az Zawr province, where it has relocated much of its leadership, fighters, and materiel. Despite losing much of its territory, ISIS continued to fight against pro-Syrian regime forces in Hamah province in central Syria.⁹⁶ ISIS also launched counter-attacks against pro-regime forces in Homs province, and fighting continued at the end of the quarter.⁹⁷ In Iraq, ISIS continued to control al Qaim on the border with Syria and the desert areas around it. Coalition officials estimated that 5,000 to 10,000 ISIS fighters remained in this area.⁹⁸ This area between Iraq and Syria, known as the Middle Euphrates River Valley, has increasingly become the epicenter of ISIS's remaining territory and power.⁹⁹

LEADERSHIP AND FINANCING

DoD officials said that ISIS leader Abu Bakr al Baghdadi was likely still alive and located in Dayr az Zawr.¹⁰⁰ On September 29, ISIS released a recording purportedly from al Baghdadi praising ISIS fighters, which DoD officials said was likely authentic.¹⁰¹ While Coalition operations successfully disrupted the ability of ISIS to maintain its command and control apparatus, airstrikes on ISIS leadership have not resulted in the group's tactical collapse or stopped rank-and-file ISIS members from fighting.¹⁰² However, DoD officials maintained that military setbacks and deaths of leaders have had some tangible effects on the morale of remaining ISIS fighters, including an increasing number of ISIS fighters surrendering.¹⁰³ About 500 fighters surrendered in Tal Afar, and about 1,000 surrendered in Hawija.¹⁰⁴

DoD officials also said that ISIS recruiting has suffered but has not stopped entirely. ISIS continues to receive foreign fighters, although that number has dropped, as well as new recruits from the local population under its control, mainly through coercion.¹⁰⁵ ISIS also has not been able to recruit from liberated areas.¹⁰⁶

In August, Coalition airstrikes destroyed ISIS financial centers and cash depositories in Dayr az Zawr province in Syria and in Hawija and al Mukana in Iraq, destroying a total of five sites.¹⁰⁷ In total, the Coalition has struck over 30 ISIS financial centers during OIR, while the Iraqi government has halted international transactions at approximately 90 bank

branches located within ISIS territory.¹⁰⁸ As a result, ISIS has increasingly turned to arbitrary taxation and resource confiscation to fund its operations.¹⁰⁹

ISIS generated the majority of its revenue from energy resources, increasingly supplemented by extortion of the populations under its control.¹¹⁰ As those areas and populations shrank, ISIS's revenue decreased.¹¹¹ The SDF took control from ISIS of the largest single natural gas operation in Syria, near Dayr az Zawr city, but ISIS retained significant petrochemical resources to the east and south.¹¹²

In Raqqah, ISIS enforcers have reportedly opted to issue fines in lieu of corporeal punishments for rule violations and forced citizens to exchange Syrian and international currency for ISIS-issued money.¹¹³ ISIS defectors and former operatives have suggested that ISIS is able to bring in over \$1,000 per day from fines on individuals.¹¹⁴

For further information on operations to counter ISIS financing, see information in Appendix C.

Despite setbacks to its control over towns and cities, ISIS maintained control over some oil infrastructure. ISIS is estimated to bring in between \$4 and \$10 million per month through illicit oil trading, and has been helped by the difficulty of tracking laundered oil and separating ISIS-sold oil from legitimate sources.¹¹⁵

While ISIS retains some infrastructure, Coalition operations have substantially affected its ability to extract oil resources. From July 1 to September 30, 2017, Coalition forces launched 300 strikes that targeted 1,300 pieces of oil infrastructure, including gas oil separation plants, oil well heads, pump jacks, tanker trucks, and other oil-related equipment. The majority of strikes were carried out in eastern Syria, targeting oil infrastructure in Dayr az Zawr and Abu Kamal.¹¹⁶ Coalition airplanes also struck at least three oil markets to disrupt sales, and dropped leaflets to discourage purchases of ISIS oil.¹¹⁷ In total, over the past 2 years, ISIS has lost approximately 90 percent of its oil revenues.¹¹⁸

THE FUTURE OF ISIS IN IRAQ AND SYRIA

Senior DoD officials predicted that as ISIS continued to meet defeat on the battlefield, it would continue to transition into an insurgency that operates in small cells underground in Iraq and Syria.¹¹⁹ ISIS demonstrated its continued ability to strike Iraqi and Syrian cities outside of its area of control, and may continue to use these two countries as a base from which to plot external attacks. ISIS has used the safe havens under its control to conduct propaganda campaigns using social media and the internet. However, lethal strikes on ISIS propagandists and the ongoing loss of territory have hampered ISIS's propaganda output, which decreased during this reporting period.¹²⁰

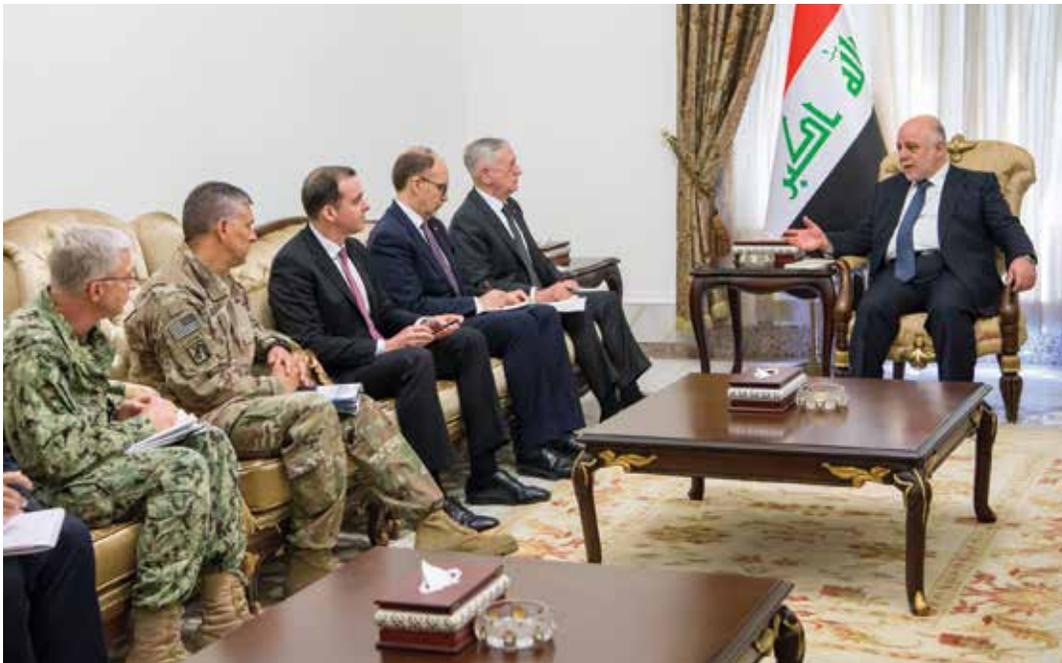


A Coalition airstrike destroys ISIS oil production equipment near Dayr Az Zawr, Syria. (DoD video capture)

U.S. Government leaders continued to state that the Iraqi government must find a political solution for the long-standing ethnic and sectarian tensions among the Iraqi people, to promote inclusive governance and prevent a resurgence of violent extremism after ISIS's territorial defeat.¹²¹

DoD officials said battlefield successes have enabled intelligence gathering about ISIS's external operations. As a result, U.S. and Coalition forces have worked with Interpol to compile about 19,000 names into a database and successfully disrupted plots in at least 15 countries across Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Canada.¹²² Nicholas Rasmussen, Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, said he still worries that a small number of skilled ISIS fighters could move out of the region and launch attacks in the West or in their homelands.¹²³

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) maintains a program on countering violent extremism that contributes to the counter-ISIS campaign as part of a broader counterterrorism framework. The program increases awareness of the threat from ISIS in the United States, including tactics, techniques, and procedures used to recruit and radicalize individuals, and supports counter-ISIS messaging campaigns conducted by Federal agencies and their partners. To address these objectives, DHS delivers community awareness briefings and helps external partners develop domestic counter-ISIS campaigns.¹²⁴ DHS maintains awareness of the activities of terrorist groups to identify trends in tactics, targets, and threats that either have a nexus to the Homeland, or represent potential opportunities to identify threat indicators or risk mitigation actions to prevent future attacks. In FY 2017, DHS monitored at least 19 incidents which it assessed had some link to ISIS.¹²⁵



Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis and Special Presidential Envoy Brett McGurk meet with Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al Abadi in Baghdad. (DoD photo)

ISIS: Global Reach

As ISIS has lost territory in Iraq and Syria, its ideology continued to inspire terror worldwide through a loose network of global affiliates and namesakes. While ISIS members established some of these groups, others arose when existing Islamist organizations appropriated the ISIS name and elements of its ideology. Several of the affiliates have acquired funding, weapons, recruitment, and tactics from core ISIS.¹²⁶

This quarter, Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis designated Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines—an ongoing military operation to isolate, degrade, and defeat ISIS in the Philippines—as a named contingency operation. This operation is a comprehensive counterterrorism campaign by the DoD, other U.S. Government agencies, and international partners to support the Philippine government and military in their fight against ISIS elements within the country.¹²⁷ This section highlights events that took place in the Philippines under that operation, as well as events in three other places—Egypt, Libya, and the Niger/Mali border area—involving ISIS. ISIS-associated groups were also active in Yemen, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Tunisia, the Russian Caucasus, and other areas around the world.¹²⁸

THE PHILIPPINES

Although a predominantly Roman Catholic country, the Philippines has historically struggled with violent extremist separatist groups in the country’s Muslim-populated south. In recent years, several of these Islamist insurgent groups have declared allegiance to ISIS.¹²⁹

In July 2017, the DoS identified the Abu Sayyaf Group, established in the early 1990s, as the most violent terrorist group in the Philippines. For a quarter century, this organization has fought for an independent Islamic state in Western Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago.¹³⁰ In 2014, Abu Sayyaf publicly declared allegiance to ISIS.¹³¹ The Maute Group, a Philippine jihadist organization active since 2013, also pledged allegiance to ISIS in 2016 and styled itself as IS-Ranao.¹³²



Philippine Marines conduct room-clearing drills during military operations in urban terrain training. (U.S. Marine Corps photo)

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front, a large militant group with a violent history in the Philippines, concluded a landmark peace accord with the government in 2014. Despite its past actions, this organization is now urging other Islamists to lay down their arms in the interest of advancing the terms of the ceasefire, which include plans to establish an autonomous Muslim region in the country's south.¹³³

In May 2017, however, ISIS-affiliated militants attacked and occupied the city of Marawi on the island of Mindanao, and fighting for the city between government forces and the militants continued this quarter.¹³⁴ These ISIS fighters have reportedly borrowed tactics employed by their associates in Mosul, Iraq, using sniper fire, hostages for protective cover, and tunnel networks to avoid detection. According to a Philippine military official, these ISIS-affiliates are better armed than previous Philippine jihadists. They received funding and communications from core ISIS in preparation for the Marawi assault, in which the militants employed high-powered weapons, night vision goggles, and surveillance drones.¹³⁵

This Quarter

A video released by ISIS in September urged potential recruits to go to the Philippines, and to Marawi specifically, rather than to Syria or Iraq. ISIS fighters killed on Mindanao included Malaysians, Indonesians, Saudis, Pakistanis, and other foreign fighters.¹³⁶

In September 2017, U.S. Pacific Command announced that it had deployed new drone assets to the Philippines to provide increased surveillance support for the fight against ISIS on Mindanao. The United States has also provided both manned and unmanned surveillance aircraft directly to the Philippine government.¹³⁷ During this quarter, senior U.S. leaders who made visits to the Philippines included Secretary of State Rex Tillerson; Commander of the U.S. Pacific Command Admiral Harry B. Harris, Jr.; and U.S. Marine Corps Commandant General Robert B. Neller.¹³⁸

On October 6, 2017, the U.S. Department of Justice unsealed charges against three men accused of plotting a bombing and shooting attack in New York City in the name of ISIS. These included a Philippine citizen arrested in April 2017 in the Philippines on charges related to this plot.¹³⁹

SINAI, EGYPT

Jihadist violence in Egypt accelerated in the wake of the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings and further escalated following the 2013 coup that deposed the democratically elected president and

Figure 1.

Map of the Philippines

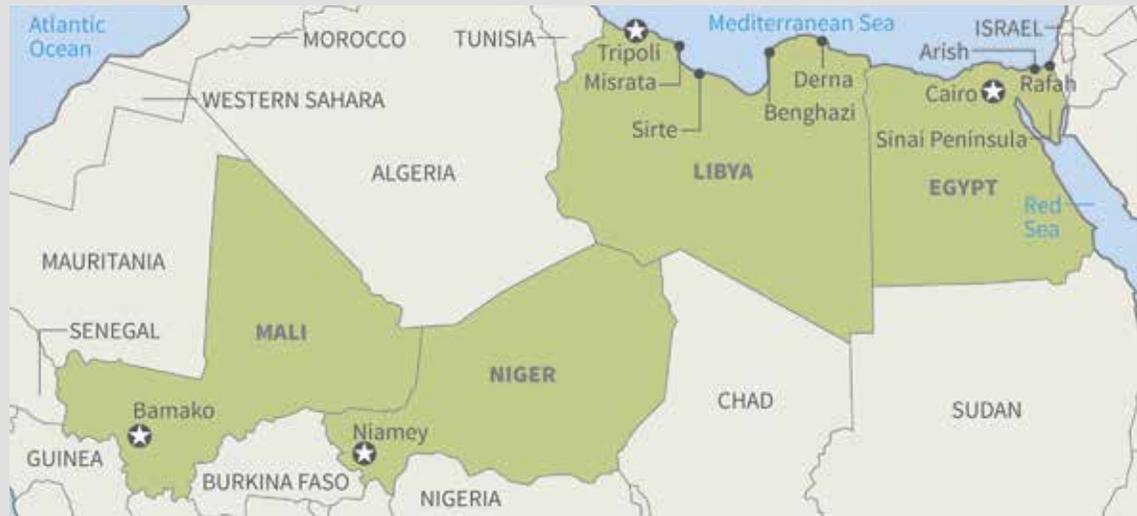


(continued on next page)

ISIS: Global Reach *(continued from previous page)*

Figure 2.

Map of North Africa



Muslim Brotherhood leader, Mohamed Morsi. The primary jihadist group in Egypt, Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, originally followed the ideology of al Qaeda, though it was never a formal affiliate.¹⁴⁰ On November 9, 2014, the group declared its allegiance to ISIS, and in the style of other global ISIS affiliates, adopted the name “Willayet Sinai,” meaning Sinai Province (of the Islamic State).¹⁴¹ Since declaring allegiance to ISIS, Willayet Sinai has carried out over 800 attacks across Egypt, demonstrating increasingly advanced tactics, and killed over 200 Egyptian security personnel between January and September 2017.¹⁴²

This Quarter

In July and September, Willayet Sinai used car bombs and firearms to kill at least 41 Egyptian security forces personnel. These were coordinated operations in which the car bomb struck an area crowded with police and military, and in the ensuing chaos, terrorists on foot opened fire with small arms to compound the lethality of the attack.¹⁴³

Despite these challenges, government forces kept the insurgents largely confined to northern Sinai and prevented them from seizing and holding territory.¹⁴⁴ Egyptian security forces also prevented a planned attack on Cairo in early September, when police killed 10 alleged militants in two simultaneous raids.¹⁴⁵

LIBYA

Islamist elements in Libya grew in strength after the fall of Muammar Qadhafi’s regime in 2011. These jihadists, who were never a cohesive whole, fractured further as different groups traveled to Syria to fight for either ISIS or the al Qaeda affiliate, the Nusra Front.¹⁴⁶

In 2012, a group of Islamists from the Libyan city of Derna travelled to Syria to fight with ISIS. Two years later, these fighters returned to Derna and seized control of the city. In September 2014,

members of ISIS accepted pledges of allegiance from the loyalists in Derna and declared all of eastern Libya a province of ISIS, naming it “Wilayet Barqa.”¹⁴⁷ In 2015, Wilayet Barqa seized the western coastal city of Sirte and made it into a base of operations and transit hub for ISIS fighters entering and leaving Libya.¹⁴⁸

On May 19, 2016, the DoS designated Williyat Barqa in Libya as a foreign terrorist organization, specifically citing “the kidnapping and execution of 21 Egyptian Coptic Christians, as well as numerous attacks targeting both government and civilian targets that have killed scores of people.”¹⁴⁹ Beginning on August 1, 2016, U.S. airstrikes under Operation Odyssey Lightning supported the UN-backed Libyan Government of National Accord’s efforts to take back Sirte. During 4 months of fighting, from August to December, the United States conducted more than 495 airstrikes against ISIS in Sirte. Libyan forces suffered 700 killed and 3,200 wounded but claimed victory over ISIS in Sirte in early December.¹⁵⁰

This Quarter

The U.S. air campaign against ISIS in Libya resumed this quarter. On September 22, 6 coordinated U.S. drone strikes killed 17 militants and destroyed 3 vehicles at a training camp 150 miles southeast of Sirte. On September 26, 2 airstrikes killed “several ISIS militants” approximately 100 miles southeast of Sirte. According to U.S. Africa Command, ISIS used this camp as a weapons and equipment depot, transit point for fighters, and base of operations to plan attacks.¹⁵¹

In September 2017, the Libyan Government of National Accord reported that it had arrested an alleged ISIS militant involved in the 2015 beheading of the 21 Coptic Christians.¹⁵² Separately, the government’s chief prosecutor announced the capture of unnamed suspects in the 2012 attack on the U.S. diplomatic compound in Benghazi and noted that some of the suspects later joined ISIS.¹⁵³

NIGER-MALI BORDER

On October 4, four U.S. Army Special Forces soldiers were killed and two were wounded in an ambush carried out by an Islamic extremist group in Niger, near the border with Mali. The U.S. and Nigerien troops were conducting a joint patrol with about 40 soldiers when they were attacked by a group of 50 enemy fighters. At least 13 Nigerien soldiers were also killed in the attack.¹⁵⁴

Approximately 800 U.S. military personnel are currently deployed to Niger to assist Niger’s counterterrorism operations, including through train and assist efforts. Affiliates of both ISIS and al Qaeda are known to operate in the Niger-Mali border area, though as of October 17, the specific group responsible for this attack had not been identified.¹⁵⁵



Nigerien soldiers prepare their magazines for a dismounted patrol in Diffa, Niger. (U.S. Army photo)

Syrian Civil War

Diplomats from more than a dozen countries used five separate negotiating tracks this quarter to seek solutions to Syria’s increasingly complicated 6-year civil war. Separate teams of negotiators met in Astana, Geneva, Cairo, Amman, and New York City to discuss ceasefires, “de-escalation zones,” and the broad strokes of a political settlement to end the war and defeat ISIS and the Nusrah Front, among other topics. Specifically:

- In early July in Amman, Russian, Jordanian, and U.S. officials agreed on terms of a ceasefire and de-escalation in parts of southwest Syria.¹⁵⁶ As of early August, Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, Brett McGurk, described the truce as delivering “promising results,” and an American academic observer noted that Russia seemed to be successfully inducing Iranian-supported forces there to observe the agreement.¹⁵⁷ In September, Jordanian and Russian foreign ministers reportedly agreed on the need for Iranian-backed militias to withdraw 40 kilometers from the Syrian border.¹⁵⁸ While fighting decreased by the end of the quarter, armed groups had not yet withdrawn.¹⁵⁹
- In late July and early August, Egypt sponsored negotiations in Cairo between various Syrian opposition factions and the Russian Defense Ministry, which spoke on behalf of the Syrian regime, reaching agreements on ceasefires for Eastern Ghota and Homs.¹⁶⁰ The Homs ceasefire was marred by airstrikes carried out by the Syrian regime, according to media reports citing residents and the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.¹⁶¹
- Also in July, the Geneva-based, UN-sponsored negotiations led by UN Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura continued with, as he put it, “no breakthrough, no breakdown, and no one walking out.”¹⁶² During the UN Security Council discussions of Syria, the Syrian regime’s foreign minister stated that the Syrian regime was open to negotiations with Syria’s Kurds over their demand for autonomy after ISIS has been defeated.¹⁶³
- In September, a sixth round of talks in Astana reportedly produced an agreement delineating four de-escalation zones, including the Idlib zone.¹⁶⁴ Turkey planned to deploy observers inside the Idlib de-escalation zone while Russia and Iran patrolled the zone’s borders.¹⁶⁵
- Also in September, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson led discussions among the foreign ministers of 17 western and Arab countries who met in New York. They agreed on points to guide their joint efforts to defeat ISIS and the Nusrah Front and bring about a political settlement to the civil war in Syria in accordance with relevant UN Security Council resolutions while maintaining Syria’s territorial integrity.¹⁶⁶

While these diplomatic efforts continued outside of Syria, forces inside Syria continue to vie for advantage. In western and central Syria, the al Qaeda-dominated HTS took control of Idlib province, as well as parts of Aleppo and Homs provinces. In eastern Dayr az Zawr province, a weakened ISIS continued to lose territory in separate battles with pro-Syrian regime forces aided by Russia and with a contingent of the Coalition-backed SDF known as the Dayr az Zawr Military Council.¹⁶⁷ For more detail on efforts to defeat ISIS in Dayr az Zawr, see the section on Security on page 20.

While diplomatic efforts continued outside of Syria, forces inside Syria continue to vie for power and gain advantage.



U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson participates in the Ministerial Discussion on Syria, on the margins of the 72nd Regular Session of the UN General Assembly in September. (DoS photo)

Analysts observing military movements in Dayr az Zawr ascribed a complex set of motivations to the parties involved in the Syrian civil war. The regime’s motives reportedly include obtaining a psychological advantage and control over resources, as well as maintaining the ability to assert authority over more of its border with Iraq. It also reportedly would like to prevent a U.S. “zone of influence” from taking hold, help Iran secure a “land bridge” across Syria that connects Iraq to Lebanon, and regain control of the oil-rich province of Dayr az Zawr.¹⁶⁸

Analysts described the SDF’s advance in Dayr az Zawr as primarily intended to block the Syrian regime’s advance.¹⁶⁹ The Syrian publication *Syria Deeply* said that the SDF was “driven by Washington’s aim to secure the Iraqi border and prevent Iran from gaining a foothold in the region.”¹⁷⁰ The local leader of the SDF, however, said that its goal was to “liberate not only the oil fields but all the land, factories, and people.”¹⁷¹ A DoD spokesperson said that the U.S. military was “not in the land-grabbing business,” and that its main objective was to fight ISIS.¹⁷²

The regime’s motives reportedly include obtaining a psychological advantage and control over resources, as well as maintaining the ability to assert authority over more of its border with Iraq.

In the northwestern Syrian enclave of Afrin, ongoing low-level violence between Turkish and Turkish-supported forces and Syrian Kurds continued during the quarter, and Turkey threatened further intervention.¹⁷³ In July, the Kurdish YPG reportedly declined a Russian request to allow Syrian regime troops to enter Afrin to protect Kurds from Turkey. However, Kurdish and Turkish sources said Russians had agreed to remain in Afrin as “observers” to prevent Kurdish-Turkish conflict.¹⁷⁴ The U.S. Government expressed concern that escalating violence between Turkish-backed forces and Kurdish forces could distract fighters from battling ISIS.¹⁷⁵

In September, Russian and Syrian airplanes bombed Idlib province for 11 days, reportedly in response to an attack on pro-regime forces and Russian military police.¹⁷⁶ Turkey’s foreign minister said that the airstrikes had killed civilians and moderate rebels, and violated the ceasefire accord signed in Astana, Kazakhstan.¹⁷⁷ Opposition groups and Syrian civil defense groups said that hospitals, power stations, and displaced persons camps were hit, with some reporting at least 150 civilians killed.¹⁷⁸ Russia denied assertions that it was deliberately destroying infrastructure to force rebels into truces designed to restore the Syrian regime’s power.¹⁷⁹

GOVERNANCE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

In Iraq

The DoS attempted to promote cooperation between Iraq's central government and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) this quarter through ongoing diplomatic engagement. However, despite opposition from the United States and other nations, the KRG held a referendum on September 25, voting in favor of independence from Iraq. DoS officials stated that this referendum would complicate and destabilize political and economic cooperation between Baghdad and Erbil and jeopardize their military cooperation, and that there was potential for ethno-sectarian clashes, particularly in Kirkuk.¹⁸⁰

See page 40 for more on the Kurdish quest for autonomy.

The DoS reported that it continued to encourage Iraqi political parties to bridge differences and to build support for political and economic reform.¹⁸¹ The Iraqi government took some positive steps to boost its economy and reduce government corruption, including by prosecuting officials on corruption charges. The government also vowed to address certain allegations of human rights violations by its military forces.

The government of Prime Minister Haider al Abadi continued efforts to bring the Popular Mobilization Forces under its direct control. According to the DoS, the Popular Mobilization Forces were “in large part” responsive to Prime Minister Abadi's orders during the liberation of Mosul. Separately, the Iraqi government confirmed some violations of human rights of civilians by members of the Emergency Response Division, a unit separate from the Popular Mobilization Forces but also under the Iraqi Ministry of Interior, during the liberation of Mosul, and pledged to prosecute the perpetrators.¹⁸² Human Rights Watch criticized Baghdad for its slow response, stating that silence “further [fosters] the feeling of impunity among armed forces in Mosul.”¹⁸³

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

■ IRAQ TAKES LEGAL ACTION AGAINST CORRUPT OFFICIALS

Iraq's central government took legal action against corrupt former officials, sentencing the head of Corruption Prevention at the Integrity Commission, Iraq's anti-corruption body, to 15 years in prison, among other high-profile convictions and jail sentences. The government worked with the UNDP to build capacity to counter corruption.¹⁸⁴

■ BOND SALE SHOWS CONFIDENCE IN IRAQI ECONOMY

Iraq conducted an unsupported \$1 billion bond sale, its first since 2006, which investors found highly attractive, indicating market confidence in Iraq's future economic stability.¹⁸⁵ The high level of demand for Iraq's bond followed record levels of sales of emerging market debt earlier this year. Fitch, the rating agency, boosted its outlook for Iraq from negative to stable in March in a sign that its economy was improving.¹⁸⁶

■ IMF RELEASES \$824 MILLION IN FINANCING TO IRAQI GOVERNMENT

The IMF Executive Board approved Iraq's second review on August 1, unlocking around \$824 million of additional financing. The IMF program supports Iraq's economic reform program and aims to restore fiscal balance over the medium term. To date, Iraq has received around \$2 billion in IMF funding.¹⁸⁷

According to media reports in September, Iraqi authorities were holding 1,400 foreign wives and children of ISIS fighters in a camp near Mosul. The majority were reportedly from Turkey, but there were also individuals from Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, Russia, France, and Germany. Iraqi military authorities reportedly told the media that they were awaiting government orders as to what to do with the family members, stating that these persons needed protection because they could be subjected to violence at the hands of Iraqis who had suffered under ISIS occupation.¹⁸⁸ Referring to these families, Prime Minister Abadi said they were not under arrest and that investigations were ongoing to obtain information on them. “If they have committed a crime inside Iraq, I think the adult ones will be judged according to the Iraq law,” he said. However, no results had occurred by the end of the quarter. Human Rights Watch stated in September that the detentions appear to have no legal basis and noted that none of the detainees had been brought before a judge to assess the legality of their detention.¹⁸⁹

The DoS reported that high-level government corruption remained endemic to Iraq. It also reported that during the reporting period the Iraqi government took some steps against it. In August, Iraqi courts sentenced 26 former Iraqi officials to jail for various corruption offenses. Among those sentenced was the former Director of Transparency and Corruption Prevention at the Integrity Commission, Iraq’s anti-corruption body, who received a 15-year sentence.¹⁹⁰ In addition to the prosecutions, two senior Iraqi officials came under suspicion of corruption during the reporting period, and one, Majid al-Naswari, the Governor of Basrah, fled to Iran after the Integrity Commission began an investigation into him. During the same month, Iraqi authorities arrested Samir Kubba, the Director General of the state-owned Iraqi Airways, on charges of “bribery and job violations.”¹⁹¹ Also in August, the Iraqi government signed an agreement with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to strengthen the government’s capacity to detect, investigate, and prosecute high-profile and complex corruption cases. Under the agreement, the UNDP will provide international investigators to mentor and train Iraqi investigators. Despite efforts, Iraq continues to rank highly on measures such as Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index, ranking 166 out of 176 rated countries in its latest rankings list.¹⁹²

KEY CHALLENGES

■ KRG REFERENDUM ON INDEPENDENCE COMPLICATES RELATIONSHIP WITH IRAQ’S CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

On September 25, the KRG held a referendum on independence in areas under Iraqi Kurdish control, complicating the already strained relations between Baghdad and Erbil. According to the DoS, the results of this referendum, which favored independence for Kurdistan, could produce internecine violence, create local or regional instability, and jeopardize KRG military cooperation with Iraq’s central government essential to defeating ISIS. While communication channels remain opened between the central government and Kurdish leaders in Erbil and Sulaymaniyah, the potential for escalation and violent confrontation remained high.¹⁹³

■ RECONCILIATION REMAINS A CRITICAL CHALLENGE

Sectarian and ethnic tensions continued to require attention from all levels of government in Iraq. The international community—including the DoS, USAID, the U.S. Institute of Peace, the UN, and other nations—worked to assist with reconciliation efforts in anticipation of the liberation of towns under ISIS’s control. For example, with UN and Coalition support, Prime Minister Abadi moved to decentralize power and integrate Sunni provincial leaders into the planning for post-ISIS stabilization and governance in Mosul.¹⁹⁴

While Iraq continued to face economic challenges, there were some positive economic events during the reporting period. In August, Iraq completed a \$1 billion unsupported international bond sale (a bond not supported by a specified revenue source nor guaranteed by another country or international organization). This was the first unsupported Iraqi bond sale since 2006. The Iraqi bond sale was seven times oversubscribed according to the Trade Bank of Iraq, which indicated a measure of market confidence in Iraq's future economic stability.¹⁹⁵

In addition to the bond sale, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved the second review of the IMF's conditions for continuation of its funding agreement with the government of Iraq, the July 2016 "Stand-By Arrangement," and released approximately \$824 million in additional financing to the Iraqi government.¹⁹⁶ The IMF's report noted that medium-term growth prospects for the Iraqi economy were positive, assuming a moderate increase in oil production and a rebound in growth in the non-oil economic sector, based upon improved security and anticipated completion of certain structural reforms led by the Iraqi government. However, the IMF concluded that the medium-term outlook was subject to "significant" risks arising from oil price instability, insecurity, political tensions, and weak administrative capacity. The KRG referendum on independence was an example of political tension that could affect economic stability and growth. Following the referendum, the governments of Iraq, Iran, and Turkey announced that they would discuss shutting down the export of oil from the Iraqi Kurdistan Region.¹⁹⁷

The IMF stated that, as part of the restructuring effort and to comply with the terms of the Stand-By Arrangement, the Iraqi government must curtail inefficient expenditures and focus on rebuilding physical infrastructure and enhancing human capital. For example, the report noted that between 2002 and 2014, public sector employment had tripled and that despite the oversized public sector, even when compared to other oil-exporting economies, the quality of public services such as health, education, and electricity was "sub-par."¹⁹⁸ In a July 23 letter to IMF Director Christine Lagarde, Prime Minister Abadi wrote that "[w]e are committed to the economic reforms outlined in the [Stand-By Arrangement] and are striving to ensure lasting economic sustainability beyond the war against terrorism and for a better future for all Iraqi citizens."¹⁹⁹ The Stand-By Arrangement allowed for \$5.3 billion in total financing. Thus far, Iraq has received approximately \$2 billion from the arrangement.²⁰⁰

While continuing to scale up and consolidate gains, the UNDP has been preparing to use the FFS to support Iraqi stabilization efforts in the recently liberated city of Tal Afar, and in anticipation of the liberation of Hawija, al Qaim, Anah, and Rawa.

STABILIZATION

In Iraq

The UNDP reported that the number of Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS) projects focused on restoring basic services and jobs in areas liberated from ISIS had more than doubled (to 1,100) from April 1 to the end of the reporting period. U.S.-funded FFS activities have been ongoing in the provinces of Anbar, Diyala, Salah ad Din, and Ninewa, and in the town of Bashir in Kirkuk. While continuing to scale up and consolidate gains,



Maj. Gen. Rupert Jones, the Deputy Commander-Strategy and Support, Combined Joint Task Force-OIR, meets with a shop owner in west Mosul. (DoD photo)

the UNDP has been preparing to use the FFS to support Iraqi stabilization efforts in the recently liberated city of Tal Afar, and in anticipation of the liberation of Hawija, al Qaim, Anah, and Rawa.²⁰¹

Under the UNDP's direction, the FFS began to prepare for the liberation of Mosul in September 2016, prior to initiation of the military operations to retake the city from ISIS. Based on priorities identified by local and provincial authorities, the most urgent infrastructure projects in liberated areas of the city included rehabilitating water services, reinstating electrical, sewage and road systems, and pre-positioning critical medical equipment.²⁰² USAID reported funding the rehabilitation of four water treatment plants in Mosul that are expected to provide water to more than 500,000 residents.²⁰³

In July, the ISF completed the liberation of Mosul. Nearly 100,000 people from west Mosul and villages on the western bank of the Tigris had returned to their homes by September 1. However, more than 815,000 residents remained displaced, according to the DoS. Mosul's Old City remained deserted, its destruction so extreme that Lise Grande, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, predicted that re-occupancy will likely take a year

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

■ STABILIZATION ACTIVITIES COMMENCE IN LIBERATED TAL AFAR

Approximately 40,000 residents of Tal Afar fled prior to the start of fighting, and stabilization efforts were just beginning at the end of the quarter. As residents return, they will face many months of works to restore damage to their homes, buildings, and infrastructure.²⁰⁴

■ STABILIZATION ACTIVITIES CONTINUE IN MOSUL

In Mosul, humanitarian efforts and stabilization projects have started, allowing Iraqis to rebuild the city and some 250,000 people to return to their homes. As of the end of the quarter, however, more than 815,000 Mosul residents remained displaced.²⁰⁵

or longer.²⁰⁶ The UN estimated that more than 11 million tons of debris need to be cleared in Mosul, mostly in and around the Old City, and that basic infrastructure repair in Mosul would cost more than \$1 billion.²⁰⁷

The ISF liberated Tal Afar at the end of August, but unlike in Mosul, the majority of Tal Afar's structures were still standing after the fighting had stopped. Media reports predicted it would take months to repair scarred masonry, cover up craters, and sweep aside the rubble and waste left behind by ISIS fighters, including graffiti.²⁰⁸

With support from the DoS, USAID, the Coalition, the UNDP, and other international partners, Iraq's central government continued to lead efforts to stabilize communities liberated from ISIS's control, the DoS reported. Following military operations to oust ISIS from Tikrit and Sinjar, Prime Minister Abadi worked with local leaders to shepherd critical projects needed for people to return to their war-torn communities.²⁰⁹

The following highlights stabilization efforts in areas that experienced heavy fighting to drive out ISIS, as reported by the DoS:

- In Anbar province, nearly one million displaced people have returned to their homes and businesses. Work is underway repairing damaged houses, expanding work brigades, rehabilitating infrastructure, providing cash assistance to destitute families, and delivering grants to families in rural areas. These efforts are designed to help pave the way for an additional 585,000 residents to return to the province.²¹⁰

KEY CHALLENGES

■ DEMINING EFFORTS STRUGGLE TO MEET DEMANDS

Residents are returning to Mosul in spite of the threat of explosive hazards and daily reports of casualties and deaths due to explosives there. Casualties from explosives spiked between August 7 and 17, resulting in the transfer of some 1,100 injured people to hospitals in Ninewa and Erbil. As of September 1, there was an urgent need for increased education to help returning residents mitigate the risk of undetected explosive devices.²¹¹ Embassy Baghdad reported improving coordination and tasking with stakeholders to address the problems posed by unexploded ordnance, but demining operations continued to be a challenge.²¹²

■ AFTER 15 MONTHS, MAJOR CHALLENGES CONFRONT FALLUJAH'S RECOVERY

Stabilization operations were underway to repair 21,500 partially damaged homes in Fallujah, representing about 50 percent of the housing stock in the city. International organizations said they hoped to repair an additional 600 homes. However, 2,000 homes were completely destroyed between 2014 and 2016, and there are no current plans to rebuild them. In addition, Fallujah's main hospital, which had served 400,000 people, has not reopened. Due to security concerns, government authorities have not been able to inspect the emergency wing of the building due to a pungent odor that local staff speculated could be from sewage "or dead [ISIS] bodies."²¹³

■ CONCERNS REMAIN REGARDING THE DETENTION AND HANDLING OF SUSPECTED MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS OF ISIS

During and after battles with ISIS, the Ministries of Defense and Interior, as well as the CTS, detain ISIS fighters and families. Reports that the DoS assessed as credible have been lodged describing overcrowded detention facilities; insufficient food, water, and medical care in those facilities; detention without proper access to legal help; and some physical harm to detainees. The DoS continued to press the Iraqi government to adhere to its laws and procedures while detaining these people.²¹⁴



A mine clearing line charge detonated during training at the Besmaya Range Complex, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo)

- 385,000 people have returned to Salah ad Din province, and steps are underway to enable an additional 44,300 people to return home. These steps include accelerating stabilization work in Baiji, expanding stabilization along the Baiji-Shirqat and Yathrib-Balad corridors; expanding work brigades and rehabilitating infrastructure for large employers, including the Tikrit Teaching Hospital; supporting the government in its effort to consolidate security, particularly in the vicinity of Hawijah; accelerate reconciliation; and allowing for the safe return of families associated with ISIS.²¹⁵
- Implementation of 145 FFS activities in the Ninewa Plains supports vulnerable minority communities there. More than 60 projects were underway to support the diverse communities of Sinjar, Sinuni, and Rabia. However, conflict among security forces in these areas may impede the return of some people or groups.²¹⁶

The UN estimated in October that Iraq still had 2.5 million IDPs and that 11.0 million were still in need, but only 6.2 million had been targeted for assistance. The DoS is providing approximately \$47 million in FY 2017 funds to support clearance of explosive remnants of war, such as improvised explosive devices (IEDs), unexploded ordnance, and landmines. The extent of contamination by unexploded devices is extensive, and this in turn impedes and delays infrastructure projects and the return of residents. In Mosul, the full scope of demining requirements cannot yet be determined, and surveys are also underway elsewhere in Iraq. This quarter, demining operations targeted critical infrastructure, including factories, water pipelines, power stations and grids, schools, medical facilities, and major transportation arteries to facilitate the return of displaced populations. U.S. implementing partners made notable progress in the Mosul and Ramadi areas, while plans for operations in Tal Afar began. In northern Iraq and Anbar province, workers cleared more than 733,000 square meters of previously contaminated land and approximately 1,050 IEDs and pieces of unexploded ordnance. Workers also removed

unexploded remnants from the power generator sites at Mosul University and the Hammam al Alil Cement Factory, among other major projects completed this quarter. The demining will enable the powering of over 120 university buildings; further, the cement factory will provide cement to rebuild destroyed homes in Mosul and supply grout that is critical for regular maintenance to ensure the stability of the Mosul dam.²¹⁷

In Syria

U.S. stabilization efforts in Syria remained complicated this quarter by the ongoing civil war and conflicts between the Syrian regime and various factions vying for control within the country, the influence of countries outside of Syria, and the lack of a central government recognized by the United States and the Coalition.

Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS Brett McGurk said on August 4 that the U.S. Government had finalized post-liberation stabilization plans for up to 50,000 residents of Raqqah.²¹⁸ According to Deputy Envoy Terry Wolff, in September an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 persons remained in ISIS-controlled parts of Raqqah.²¹⁹ A further discussion of humanitarian assistance efforts in Syria is in the section on Humanitarian Assistance on page 56.

The DoS summarized its most significant challenge with respect to stabilization in Syria as “the lack of a trusted host nation partner, and, therefore no UN stabilization coordinator.”²²⁰ According to the DoS, political and capacity factors have impaired delivery of materials from Iraq, Turkey, and Jordan that are important to stabilization in Syria.²²¹ Further, the DoS reported that while it is “building the capacities of local governance entities to serve their communities, and encouraging development of regional and province-wide coordinating structures ... without a national-level government to tie these efforts together, it is difficult to develop sustainable, coordinated governance across regions of Syria.”²²² With U.S. support, local and provincial councils have undertaken stabilization activities, such as resuming education and conducting community clean-up campaigns.²²³

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

■ AID TO MODERATE SYRIAN OPPOSITION GROUPS NOT ASSOCIATED WITH THE SDF

The DoS reported that it continued to provide non-lethal assistance to 37 armed moderate opposition groups in Syria, containing about 68,000 fighters. This assistance comprised of food baskets, medical kits, and winterization gear, provided to enable the opposition to fight the Syrian regime and counter the influence of extremists.²²⁴ The DoS Bureau of Political-Military Affairs reported that given the pipeline of funds available and the current challenges of executing peacekeeping operations in Syria, funding for FY 2017 non-lethal assistance for the Syrian opposition had been set at \$25 million, down from \$50 million intended to be obligated for that purpose in FY 2016 from a \$65 million obligation. No funds were requested for FY 2018.²²⁵

■ PLANS FOR POST-LIBERATION OF RAQQAH COMPLETE

The U.S. Government had finalized post-liberation stabilization plans for up to 50,000 residents of Raqqah. Upon liberation, the DoS and international partners undertook to support the efforts of the civilian council to provide basic services.²²⁶

The DoS reported that the United States has continued to provide financial support to efforts to establish civil society in areas outside the influence of either the Assad regime or its allies.²²⁷ The United States supported the efforts of civilian councils to provide water, education, media, and health services, and reported that the support had helped the councils undertake a “more robust role in coordinating and focusing assistance efforts.”²²⁸ U.S. assistance was also being provided to entities independent of these civilian councils, including to civic and technical associations of “skilled ex-public servants and professionals” to help restore services through “small scale civic actions.”²²⁹ The DoS said that it would not support entities assessed to be controlled by the Kurdish Democratic Union Party or its militia, the YPG.²³⁰ The DoS also led efforts to encourage a wide range of Coalition members and other governments to contribute to international efforts to stabilize liberated areas of Syria.²³¹

KEY CHALLENGES

■ SYRIAN KURDISH TERRITORIAL ASPIRATIONS INCREASE POTENTIAL FOR CONFLICT WITH SYRIAN REGIME

While the United States seeks to promote a balance of local powers in areas liberated from ISIS, major U.S. allies in the fight against ISIS—namely the Kurds and forces aligned with them—have territorial and nationalistic aspirations that could undercut that balance.²³² Syria’s foreign minister recently stated that the Kurds want “some form of self-administration” within Syria, and signaled that the regime would negotiate with the Kurds after the fight against ISIS concluded.²³³

The desires of Syrian Kurds may cause conflict both within Syria and with other countries seeking influence in that region, including Turkey, Iran, Russia, and the United States.²³⁴ The Coalition-partnered SDF/YPG seeks autonomy for northern Syria, but the local majority-Arab populations in Raqqah and other cities oppose such autonomy.²³⁵ Arab tribes in eastern Syria have expressed caution about the influence of the YPG, and their links to the PKK.²³⁶ For its part, the YPG has taken some provocative actions, such as hanging a banner of imprisoned PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan in Raqqah after taking the city from ISIS.²³⁷

■ REMOVING EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR REMAINS A MAJOR TASK

Despite challenges in coordination in Syria with implementing partners and the DoD, the DoS reported progress in its program to remove explosive remnants of war. The DoS prioritized removing remnants in and around Raqqah, and cleared 42 critical infrastructure sites so that stabilization activities could proceed. Basic and advanced training on demining continued for Syrians. Programs to destroy conventional weapons were funded at \$38 million in FY 2017, including \$30 million from the FY 2017 counter-ISIS supplemental.²³⁸ Germany contributed 2 million euros for the disposal of explosive remnants of war.²³⁹

■ HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND THE USE OF CHILD SOLDIERS BY PARTNERED FORCES RAISE CONCERNS

Although human rights conditions are vastly worse in areas under ISIS control, reported human rights issues in Kurdish-controlled areas of Syria remained a concern. The DoS’s 2016 Annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices described reports of Kurdish forces in Syria committing extra-judicial killings, displacing residents in areas liberated from ISIS, and forcing Christians and Yazidis into military service, among other alleged human rights violations. The report also described arrests of local civil council leaders, Kurdish opposition figures, journalists, and other civilians by Kurdish security forces.²⁴⁰ According to the DoS’s Trafficking in Persons report covering 2016, issued in June 2017, the YPG recruited and trained children as young as 12 years old in 2016, despite pledging in June 2014 to demobilize all fighters younger than 18.²⁴¹

The DoS noted that its continued diplomatic engagement with Kurdish military leadership and local authorities emphasized protection of human rights, including the importance of permitting the safe and voluntary return of all IDPs to their homes.²⁴² The DoS also stated that it screens entities receiving assistance “for gross violations of human rights as well as violations of international humanitarian law.”²⁴³

THE KURDISH PUSH FOR A HOMELAND

On September 25, the KRG held a historic referendum on Kurdish independence in areas under its de facto control in northern Iraq. Voters overwhelmingly favored independence. Iraq's central government called the vote "illegal," and Turkey, Syria, Iran, the United States, and others opposed it. In October, Iraq sent troops to the Kurdish Peshmerga to withdraw, and seized Kurdish-controlled oil fields. Turkey and Iran conducted military exercises near KRG-controlled territory.

A Key Ally in the Effort to Defeat ISIS

Kurds in Iraq and Syria are key U.S. partners in the fight against ISIS and over time have gained control of territory in both countries as a result of military victories. In Syria, the Kurdish-led SDF defeated ISIS in Kobani, Manbij, and the Raqqah countryside, and in October, ousted ISIS from Raqqah city. In Iraq, the KRG controlled disputed territories won from ISIS or seized when Iraq's army retreated in 2014, including the disputed city of Kirkuk. The territorial gains created new opportunities--and leverage--for Kurds in both countries, but gains in Iraq were reversed as the Iraqi Army took control of disputed territories in October following the Kurdish vote for independence.

Kurdish History and Aspirations for Autonomy

Roughly 30 million Kurds live in mountainous areas that overlap Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria. The Kurds are a distinct ethnic group, and most are Sunni Muslims. The unratified 1920 Treaty of Sevres foresaw an autonomous Kurdistan, which never materialized. Ever since, Kurds have attempted, peacefully and by force, to gain autonomy in, or independence from, those four countries.



Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis meets with Iraq's Kurdish Regional President Masoud Barzani during a visit to Erbil, Iraq, in August. (DoD photo)

Kurds in Iraq

Iraqi Kurds have sought autonomy or independence since before World War I. This goal was partially achieved after the Gulf War, and since 1997, Kurds in Iraq have maintained a semi-autonomous government in Erbil, Dohuk, and Sulaymaniyah provinces. The 2005 Iraqi Constitution recognized Kurdish autonomy in these three provinces but not the KRG's control of disputed territory outside of those provinces. The KRG is dominated by the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), established parties that are challenged by the relatively new Gorran party. The KRG has significant differences with Iraq's central government over territory and oil.

IRAQ

- 5.5 Million Kurds
- 17.5% of the Iraqi Population

SYRIA

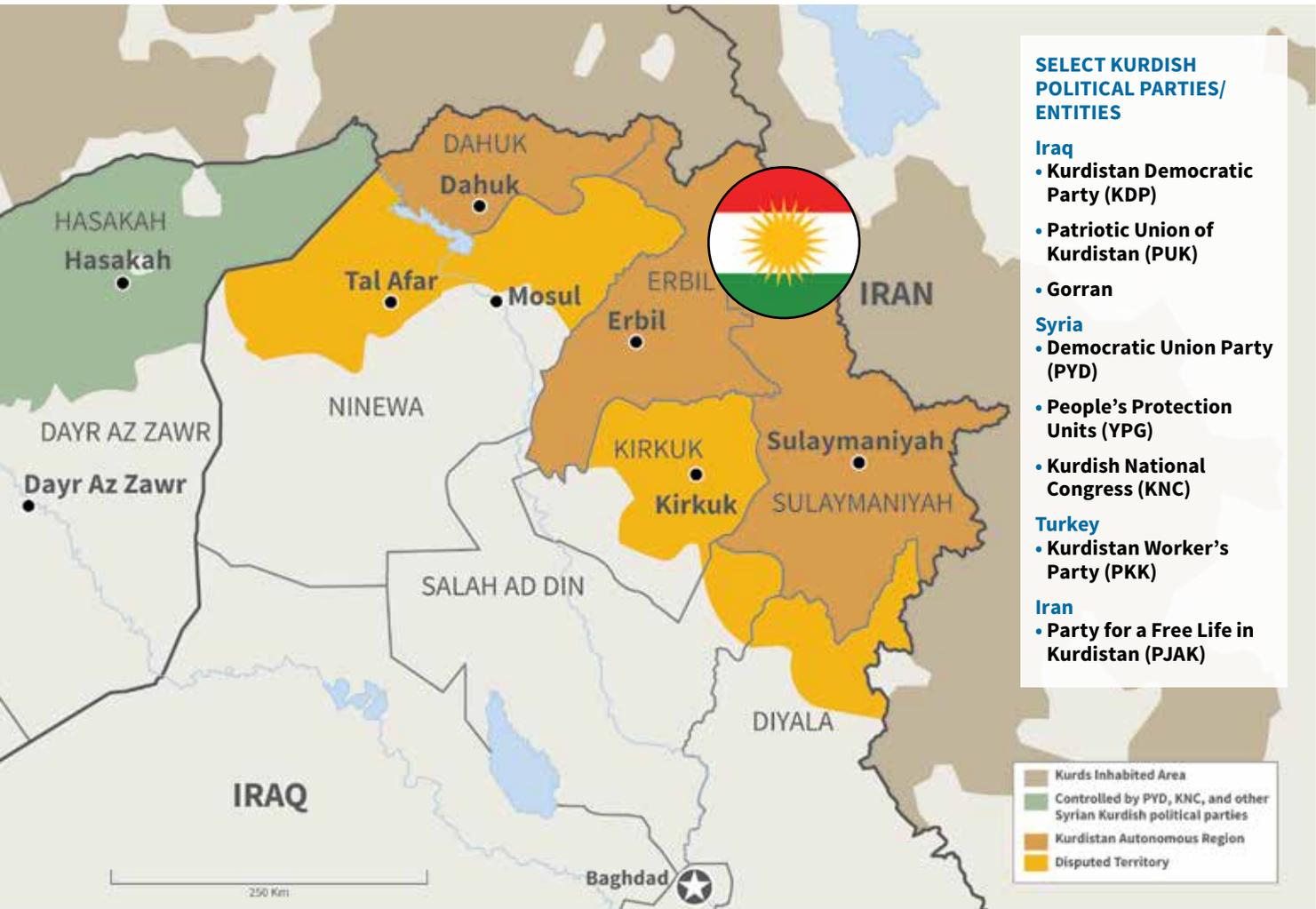
- 1.7 Million Kurds
- 9.7% of the Syrian Population

TURKEY

- 14.7 Million
- 18% of the Turkish Population

IRAN

- 8.1 Million Kurds
- 10% of the Iranian Population



SELECT KURDISH POLITICAL PARTIES/ ENTITIES

Iraq

- Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP)
- Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK)
- Gorran

Syria

- Democratic Union Party (PYD)
- People’s Protection Units (YPG)
- Kurdish National Congress (KNC)

Turkey

- Kurdistan Worker’s Party (PKK)

Iran

- Party for a Free Life in Kurdistan (PJAK)

Kurds in Syria

Syrian Kurds gained some autonomy after World War I, but successive Syrian regimes suppressed efforts towards independence. Syria’s 2011 uprising caused the regime of President Bashar al-Assad to reposition forces from Kurdish-inhabited areas. Those areas and other territory liberated from ISIS are now dominated by the Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD), an organizational and ideological offshoot of the separatist Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) in Turkey. Turkey does not distinguish the PYD or its YPG militia from the PKK and has conducted airstrikes against the YPG in Syria. Turkey strongly opposes the U.S. military arming the YPG. On September 22, Kurds in Syria voted to elect local community leaders in what they hope will be an autonomous part of Syria. While these elections received less fanfare than the referendum in Iraq, they are likely to effectively institutionalize PYD control in Kurdish-controlled areas of Syria.

Kurds in Turkey

Turkey has repressed Kurdish culture and institutions for decades. These strictures were initially relaxed under President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan but have returned since 2015. In 1978, the PKK began an on-again, off-again armed struggle for Kurdish independence, which has led to an estimated 30,000 deaths. The PKK maintains bases in Iraq and Syria and has influenced Kurdish politics in Iran.

Kurds in Iran

Iranian Kurds have sometimes sought independence and autonomy in the post-World War I era. Both the Shah and the Islamic Republic repressed Kurdish political expression. In 2004, the PKK organized the Free Life Party of Kurdistan (PJAK) to press for independence for Iran’s Kurds. In 2009, the United States designated the PJAK as a terrorist organization due to its PKK links.

Sources: See endnotes, page 115

SUPPORT TO MISSION

FY 2018 Begins with a Continuing Resolution

Congress has not enacted an FY 2018 budget, and a continuing resolution funds most Federal agencies and programs at their FY 2017 levels minus 0.6791 percent until December 8, 2017. OCO funds are exempt from this reduction. However, the DoD cannot use continuing resolution funding to start new programs, enter into multi-year contracts, or increase production rates, which it says affects the execution of OIR.²⁴⁴

DoD Status of Funds

The President’s Budget for FY 2018 requests a total of \$639.1 billion for the DoD, of which \$64.6 billion is designated for OCOs, including \$13.0 billion for OIR. Of the \$13.0 billion designated for OIR, \$1.8 billion would be used to train and equip partner forces in Iraq and Syria and maintain the current U.S. force posture of 5,765 troops in these two countries.²⁴⁵ The request in OCO funding is 15.7 percent less than the amount enacted in FY 2017 because the FY 2018 budget eliminates the practice of using OCO funds to support DoD base budget expenditures.²⁴⁶

Figure 3.

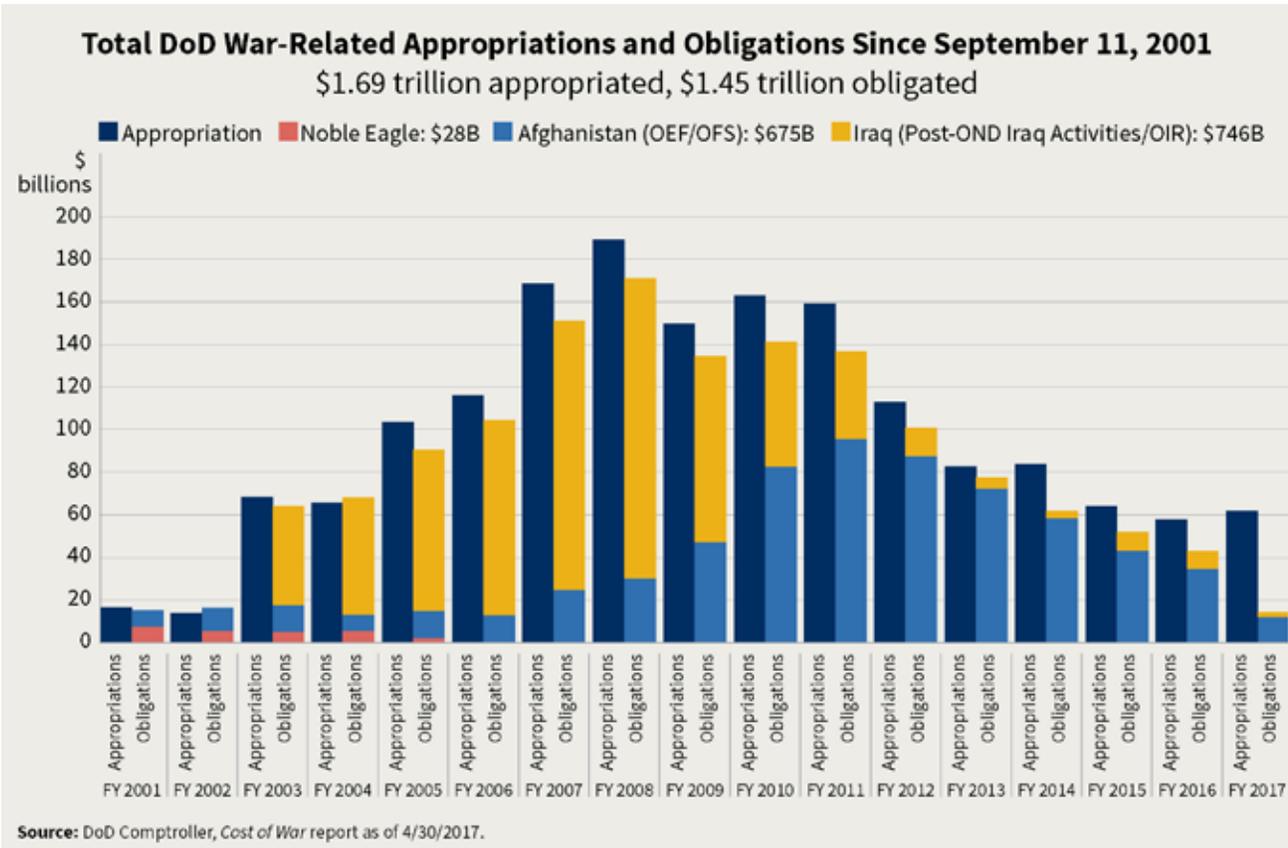


Table 2.

DoS and USAID OCO Funding for Iraq and Syria, in millions

	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Estimate*	FY 2018 Request
Syria	\$177.1	\$742.9	\$191.5
Iraq	\$1,246.7	\$1,997.9	\$1,320.3
TOTAL	\$1,423.8	\$2,740.8	\$1,511.8

*Includes FY 17 SAA and FY 17 Consolidated Appropriations Act.

Sources: DoS, "FY 2018 Congressional Budget Justification-Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs," 5/23/2017; DoS, Responses to OIG Request for Information, 10/5/2017 and 10/13/2017.

The DoD has spent a total of \$15.8 billion on the counter-ISIS mission since OIR began on August 8, 2014, including \$4.2 billion in FY 2017, as of April 30, 2017. Since 2003, the DoD has spent \$747 billion in Iraq and Syria. Since September 11, 2001, Congress has appropriated \$1.69 trillion and the DoD has obligated \$1.45 trillion for war-related expenses in Afghanistan, Iraq, and related operations, as well as for homeland security missions under Operation Noble Eagle.²⁴⁷ For a breakdown of war-related appropriations and obligations since September 11, 2001, see Figure 3.

DoS and USAID Status of Funds

The President's FY 2018 budget request for State, Foreign Operations, and Related Agencies includes a total of \$40.3 billion for the DoS and USAID, a reduction of \$17.2 billion (-30 percent) compared to the funding enacted for FY 2017. For FY 2018, the budget request includes \$12 billion in global OCO funding, a reduction of \$8.8 billion (-42 percent) compared to the funding enacted for FY 2017.²⁴⁸ Of the amount requested, \$5.6 billion would support efforts to defeat ISIS and other terrorist organizations. These OCO funds would also support stabilization in liberated areas and help counter-ISIS operations.²⁴⁹ FY 2018 OCO funds requested for the DoS and USAID include a total of \$1.3 billion for operations and foreign assistance programs in Iraq and \$191.5 million for operations in Syria.²⁵⁰

Table 2 provides a comparison of OCO funds expended, obligated, and requested for FYs 2016 through 2018 for operations in Iraq and Syria. Consistent with the

KEY DEVELOPMENTS**INSPECTORS GENERAL PUBLISH PLAN FOR COORDINATED OVERSIGHT**

On October 1, 2017, the Lead IG published the Comprehensive Oversight Plan for OCO, which included the Joint Strategic Oversight Plan for OIR. This is the third such plan submitted to Congress describing the Lead IG and partner agencies' whole-of-government oversight of U.S. Government OIR-related activities, including security, governance and civil society, humanitarian assistance, stabilization, and support to mission. This comprehensive approach was designed to help ensure effective oversight across agency jurisdictional lines and to assist Congress and agency leadership in making informed program, policy, and funding decisions.²⁵¹

Administration's request to decrease OCO spending by \$8.8 billion or 42 percent in FY 2018, there is a significant drop in requested OCO funding for FY 2018 compared to the estimated amount of funding in FY 2017. Foreign Military Financing for Iraq, which was funded at \$250 million in FY 2016 and FY 2017, is absent in the FY 2018 request.²⁵²

DoD Report on the Cost of War to the Individual Taxpayer

This quarter, as directed by the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2017, the DoD issued a report on the estimated cost to each U.S. taxpayer of the wars in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan. This report compiled the DoD's estimated OCO obligations from FY 2001 through 2018 and divided those amounts by the number of taxpayers, as indicated by Internal Revenue Service filing statistics, to arrive at annual and cumulative totals.²⁵³

The report stated that the estimated cumulative cost of war in Iraq and Syria to the average individual who paid Federal income taxes every year since 2003 was \$3,955. The cumulative cost of the wars to a taxpayer who has paid taxes since 2001 was \$7,740. The report estimated that in FY 2018, the cost to the average taxpayer will be \$62 for OIR and \$281 for all OCOs. The cost per taxpayer of the war in Iraq peaked in FY 2007 at \$620.²⁵⁴

Update on Department-wide Audit of the DoD

On September 27, 2017, Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis announced that the DoD was ready to undergo a full financial statements audit in FY 2018. Senior DoD officials said the DoD is unlikely to pass its first Department-wide audit with a clean opinion. However, the Deputy Secretary of Defense said that "what we do next with auditor findings and recommendations is the most important part of the process." This will bring the DoD into compliance with a congressional mandate to achieve audit readiness and enhance oversight of operations such as Operation Freedom's Sentinel (OFS).²⁵⁵

KEY CHALLENGES

■ CONTINUING RESOLUTION COMPLICATES OIR FUNDING

FY 2018 is the ninth consecutive fiscal year that has begun with the DoD, DoS, and USAID operating under a continuing resolution. These short-term, stopgap funding measures prevent the Federal Government from shutting down but also inhibit budget predictability and planning, and restrict new programs and contracts. Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs Dana W. White stated that continuing resolutions waste millions of dollars in administrative costs and "hurt the readiness of our forces and their equipment." She added, "The longer the CR lasts, the more damage [it does]."²⁵⁶

■ TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS REMAINS A CONCERN FOR U.S. CONTRACTORS IN OIR

The U.S. Government's ability to adhere to its own policies to detect and combat trafficking in persons in OIR is limited by the labor practices of countries in the region and by constraints on DoD oversight of U.S. contractors and companies operating overseas. Contractors supporting U.S. military, diplomatic, or humanitarian operations related to OIR may rely on foreign workers from impoverished or developing countries who are vulnerable to labor abuses and trafficking. The DoS lists Iraq as a Tier 2 Watch List country, which means that Iraq does not fully comply with minimal standards for the prosecution, protection, and prevention of trafficking, and lacks sufficient evidence of compliance improvement.²⁵⁷

COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS IN U.S. SUPPORT CONTRACTS OVERSEAS

LEAD IG FOCUS

Trafficking in persons, or human trafficking, refers to the subjection of men, women, and children to exploitative conditions that can be tantamount to slavery. As commonly used, the term includes compelled labor and sex trafficking, under conditions also referred to as modern slavery, involuntary servitude, or debt bondage.²⁵⁸ Combating trafficking in persons (CTIP) is a significant challenge worldwide. The International Labour Organization estimated that in 2012, roughly 21 million people were subjected to various forms of trafficking, and that in 2014 forced labor and related trafficking generated approximately \$150 billion in illegal profits. Trafficking in persons raises security, social and criminal justice, human rights, economic, migration, and labor issues.²⁵⁹

The U.S. Government plays a leading role in international efforts to combat trafficking in persons.²⁶⁰ Key efforts include foreign country reporting and blacklisting, foreign aid restrictions, the awarding of trade preferences, financial sanctions, and preventing U.S. Government participation in trafficking overseas.²⁶¹ The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, including amendments to strengthen CTIP contracting provisions, remains the cornerstone of U.S. policy to combat human trafficking.²⁶²

When the U.S. Government conducts military, diplomatic, or humanitarian operations overseas, however, it often relies upon contracts for services such as construction, security, and maintenance. Despite a zero tolerance policy, the Government's ability to detect and fully combat trafficking in persons in OCO environments has often been limited.²⁶³ Labor practices of countries in the Middle East, the theater of operation for OIR, present particular trafficking risks to laborers seeking employment there, including employment on U.S. contracts. These workers often come from impoverished or developing countries, where job opportunities and wages are poor. The methods used to recruit these workers make them vulnerable to a variety of labor abuses in their home country, in transit, or in the country of employment.²⁶⁴ Labor practices regarding wages, hours, housing, access to identity documents, and availability of return travel can be indications that human trafficking is occurring.²⁶⁵

The Lead IG and its partner agencies seek to assess compliance with CTIP requirements and identify opportunities for improvement in overseas contracting practices. For example, the DoS, USAID, and DoD OIGs have issued several CTIP-related reports in recent years. The DoD OIG is currently evaluating DoD efforts to combat trafficking at DoD facilities in Kuwait, which supports counter-ISIS efforts in Iraq and Syria. The Air Force Audit Agency has several planned reviews of contract administration in a contingency environment, which include TIP provisions.²⁶⁶

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Combating Trafficking in Persons in U.S. Support Contracts Overseas *(continued from previous page)*

Migrations and Department of State Rankings for Compliance with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act in Selected Countries

The DoS publishes its annual “Trafficking in Persons Report,” which assesses levels of human trafficking in each country. The report assigns tier rankings, with a narrative justification, based on an evaluation of each country’s compliance with minimal standards for the prosecution, protection, and prevention of trafficking, and the country’s efforts to ensure compliance.²⁶⁷

Table 3 shows a distribution of migrants and rankings for Gulf countries, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Many Gulf nations are source countries, transit countries, or destination countries for migrant labor. In several cases, migrants comprise a majority of the host nation’s population. Where host countries with large migrant populations do not fully comply with U.S. standards, foreign workers face a greater risk of trafficking.²⁶⁸

Iraq

In its 2017 Trafficking in Persons Report, the DoS placed Iraq on its Tier 2 Watch List, a downgrade from 2016. The 2017 ranking means that Iraq does not fully comply with minimal standards for the prosecution, protection, and prevention of trafficking, and while it is making significant efforts to do so, there is insufficient evidence of movement toward compliance. The Iraqi government did not provide protection services to children recruited by armed groups; continued to punish and deport victims of forced labor and sex trafficking; did not permit non-governmental organizations to operate trafficking shelters; and took legal action against several such organizations.²⁶⁹

Iraq’s 2012 anti-trafficking law does not prohibit all forms of human trafficking and its definition of human trafficking is not consistent with the UN protocol. While the law criminalizes the prostitution of a child, as well as sex and labor trafficking, it lacks implementing regulations that would assist the government in enforcing the law and protecting victims. Ongoing violence in the country increases the population’s vulnerability to trafficking. Children remain vulnerable to forced recruitment by armed groups, IDPs face heightened risk due to economic and social vulnerability, and women and girls are at an increased risk of forced or temporary marriages or of forced servitude to resolve tribal disputes.²⁷⁰

Kuwait

Kuwait is a logistical support base for OIR. Kuwait also attracts a large number of foreign workers, many of whom seek employment on U.S.-funded contracts. Migrant workers also regularly work in the domestic service, construction, hospitality, and sanitation sectors. Foreign workers in Kuwait can face significant trafficking risks in their home countries or in transit, including paying exorbitant fees to recruiters or brokers, as well as in their employment on U.S. contracts. In its 2017 Trafficking in Persons Report, the DoS placed Kuwait on its Tier 2 Watch List, a placement that continued from the previous year. Many Kuwaiti government officials continue to employ arbitration and administrative penalties

to resolve grievances, rather than investigate crimes related to human trafficking. Protracted litigation and appeals processes lead many workers to decline filing court cases. In addition, corruption dissuades workers from reporting trafficking cases to law enforcement. Kuwait's sponsorship law ties a migrant worker's legal residence and valid immigration status to an employer, which restricts workers' movements and discourages them from leaving abusive employers, particularly domestic workers.²⁷¹

Protracted litigation and appeals processes lead many workers to decline filing court cases.

Improving Government Visibility and Authority Over U.S. Contracts Overseas

The U.S. Government faces limits in its ability to oversee the full range of contractor and subcontractor activities in U.S. contracts overseas, and is making efforts to improve the visibility and oversight of contractor and subcontractor labor activities. Federal agencies normally enter into contracts directly with "prime" contractors to perform services and deliver products. In turn, a prime contractor may enter into subcontracts to furnish supplies and services needed by the prime contractor to

Table 3.

Migrants in and Tier Placement of Gulf Countries, Afghanistan, and Iraq

Country	Migrants as a Percentage of Total Population (2013)*	Total Number of Migrants (2013)*	DoS Trafficking in Persons Tier Rank (2017)**
United Arab Emirates	83.7	7,826,981	2
Qatar	73.8	1,600,955	2
Kuwait	60.2	2,028,053	2 Watch List
Bahrain	54.7	729,357	2
Saudi Arabia	31.4	9,060,433	2 Watch List
Oman	30.6	1,112,032	2 Watch List
Afghanistan	N/A	N/A	2
Iraq	N/A	N/A	2 Watch List

* Data does not include the number of foreign workers in each country but rather reflect the number of overall migrants, including children, to each country.

** Tier 1 countries fully comply with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act's minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking. Tier 2 countries do not fully comply with the minimum standards, but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance. Tier 2 Watch List countries do not fully comply with the minimum standards and are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance, but have significant or increasing numbers of victims and insufficient evidence of compliance improvement. Tier 3 refers to countries whose governments do not fully comply with the minimum standards and are not making significant efforts to do so.

Sources: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "Trends in International Migrant Stock: the 2013 Revision (latest data available); Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report, 2017"; GAO-15-102.

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Combating Trafficking in Persons in U.S. Support Contracts Overseas *(continued from previous page)*

fulfill the contract. Under Federal acquisition regulations and contracting laws, the Federal agency holds the prime contractor responsible for the performance of its subcontractors. The agency thus has limited visibility over the subcontract. This is particularly true for overseas contracting, where host-nation laws and labor practices apply, and where large numbers of foreign workers may be employed.²⁷²

Laws Strengthen CTIP but Implementing Provisions Could be Clarified

The National Defense Authorization Act of 2013, which amended the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, sought to strengthen CTIP contracting provisions by requiring greater monitoring of subcontractor recruiting and employment practices in U.S. contracts overseas. New anti-trafficking provisions prohibit misleading recruitment practices, charging employees recruitment fees, failing to provide return transportation upon contract completion, providing or arranging inadequate housing, and failing to provide written employment contracts in a language the employee understands. Additionally, contractors are now required to certify that they have implemented compliance plans pursuant to Federal acquisition regulation requirements, and must monitor, detect, and terminate contracts if subcontractors engage in prohibited practices. Contractors and subcontractors are also required to post their compliance plans at the worksite, immediately disclose any alleged trafficking violations, and provide government agencies with reasonable access of facilities.²⁷³

Strengthened provisions in U.S. law and Federal acquisition requirements also prohibit charging workers recruitment fees, but agency implementing policies are less clear. Federal acquisition regulations prohibit contractors, their employees, and their agents from charging employees recruitment fees, but they do not define what constitutes a fee. The National Defense Authorization Act of 2013 prohibits the charging of “unreasonable” placement or recruiting fees, described as being equal to or greater than the employee’s monthly salary. Within the DoD, U.S. Central Command acquisition instructions for Iraq and Afghanistan prohibit the use of firms that charge illegal recruiting fees, but these fees are undefined. USAID procurement guidance repeats the prohibition on recruitment fees, but does not define them. A DoS procurement information bulletin that provides guidance on monitoring contracts for CTIP compliance prohibits charging employees recruitment fees, and defines acceptable recruitment costs, which the contractor may, with approval, include in the contract cost.

The U.S. Government continues efforts to reduce trafficking risks in its contracts overseas. Strengthening anti-trafficking law and CTIP contracting provisions has improved oversight of contractors, prohibited certain recruitment and employment practices, and required greater disclosure by contractors. The DoS and international labor organizations continue to highlight the significant scope and human costs of trafficking, to encourage increased preventative practices, and to raise public awareness of exploitation that offends universal concepts of human dignity.²⁷⁴





Iraqis receiving food at an IDP camp in the vicinity of Badoush, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo)

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Iraq Crisis	55
Syria Crisis	56

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

When ISIS was dislodged from Mosul in early July, humanitarian responders faced the immense challenge of providing humanitarian assistance to more than 800,000 residents of Mosul displaced by the fighting, including nearly 350,000 people residing in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps, and an additional 280,000 residents who had returned to the city.¹ Along with the Mosul response, humanitarian responders also assisted IDPs from Tal Afar, Hawija, and areas in western Anbar province.²

In Syria, IDPs continued flowing north out of Raqqah and Dayr az Zawr province toward areas controlled by the U.S.-backed SDF, where humanitarian responders provided assistance at screening sites and IDP camps.³ The Syrian regime this quarter opened a land route to Dayr az Zawr, which enabled the UN to end costly airdrops of aid packages into a formerly besieged area and instead access residents by land.⁴ In the northwest, the capture of key areas of Idlib province by a local al Qaeda affiliate resulted in the temporary closure of border crossings into the province from Turkey, and created new challenges for humanitarian responders working to prevent their programming from benefitting a designated terrorist organization.⁵



A woman and two children sit at an IDP camp near Badoush, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo)

The U.S. Government implemented humanitarian assistance activities in Syria and Iraq as distinct and separate from military operations through three operating units:

- **USAID/Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)** works with UN and international non-governmental organization partners to provide support to IDPs and other conflict-affected populations in Syria and Iraq.
- **USAID/Office of Food for Peace (FFP)** provides food assistance to IDPs, refugees, and others in need who have been impacted by the crises in Syria and Iraq.
- **DoS/Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM)** works through the UN and other partners to protect and support IDPs, refugees, and other conflict victims in Syria and Iraq, and provides assistance to others in the surrounding countries who have been affected by these complex crises.

USAID and PRM receive appropriations that are not designated in advance for use in response to a particular humanitarian crisis, which allows the U.S. Government greater flexibility in responding to ongoing and emerging crises. OFDA and FFP primarily use International Disaster Assistance funds and FFP also uses a small amount of resources authorized by Title II Food Aid of the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954 (Public Law 480) to respond to the Syria and Iraq complex crises. PRM uses Migration and Refugee Assistance funds for this purpose.⁶ Each office awards funds to implementing partners, including various international organizations such as the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Program (WFP), the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), as well as private non-governmental organizations. These organizations carry out assistance programs on the ground in Syria, Iraq, and neighboring countries hosting Syrian and Iraqi refugees.⁷ Table 4 provides a breakdown of humanitarian assistance to the Syria and Iraq crises.

Table 4.

Status of Cumulative FY 2015, FY 2016, and FY 2017 U.S. Government Humanitarian Assistance Funds for the Syria and Iraq Crises, as of 9/30/2017 (in millions/rounded)

Office	Syria Obligated	Syria Disbursed	Iraq Obligated	Iraq Disbursed
OFDA	\$882.1	\$441.1	\$525.9	\$319.0
FFP	\$1,094.5	\$1,306.6	\$412.9	\$160.0
PRM	\$2,376.7	\$2,527.8	\$732.8	\$683.8
TOTAL	\$4,353.3	\$4,275.5	\$1,671.6	\$1,162.8

Notes: USAID and the DoS reported disbursements that may exceed obligations because some disbursements during the reporting period were made against awards obligated in a different quarter or prior to FY 2015. In OIR reports prior to March 31, 2016, the DoS reported disbursements only from funds obligated from FY 2015 forward. Data on disbursements can provide valuable information about how much money has been spent on activities as well as the amounts of funding that remain available for expenditure. Provided a letter of credit from the U.S. Government, however, humanitarian assistance implementing partners may accrue expenses before drawing down on agency funds. For this reason, expenditures on humanitarian assistance activities sometimes exceed disbursements. Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Sources: USAID, OFDA/FFP, Response to USAID OIG Request for Information, 10/24/2017; DoS, PRM, Response to the DoS OIG Request for Information, 10/16/2017.

IRAQ: QUARTERLY FOCUS OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

DAHUK

The number of IDPs in Dahuk province decreased by more than 23,000 during the month of August, more than in any other province.

KIRKUK

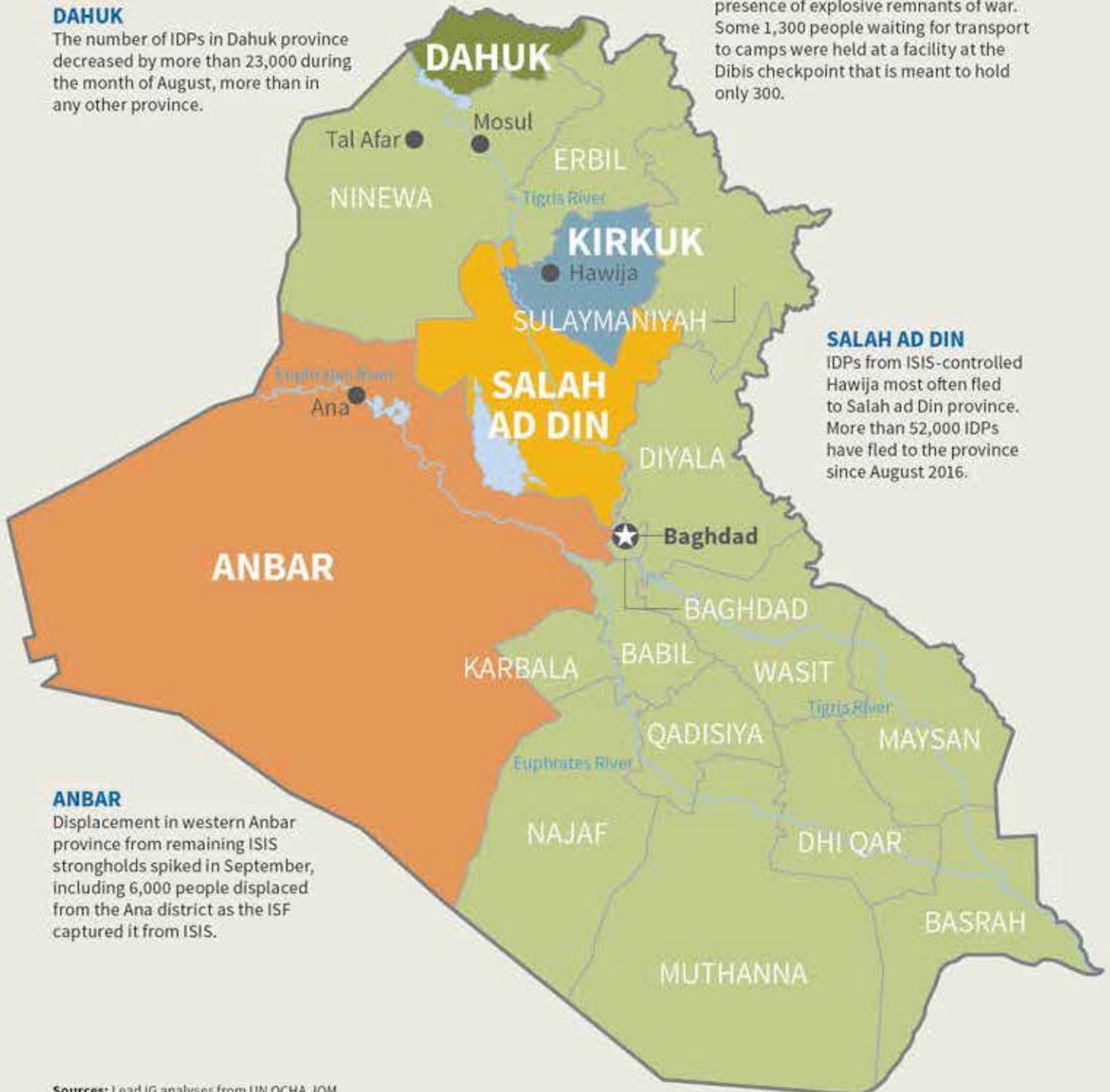
IDPs fleeing fighting in Hawija faced difficult conditions due to the extensive presence of explosive remnants of war. Some 1,300 people waiting for transport to camps were held at a facility at the Dibis checkpoint that is meant to hold only 300.

SALAH AD DIN

IDPs from ISIS-controlled Hawija most often fled to Salah ad Din province. More than 52,000 IDPs have fled to the province since August 2016.

ANBAR

Displacement in western Anbar province from remaining ISIS strongholds spiked in September, including 6,000 people displaced from the Ana district as the ISF captured it from ISIS.



Sources: Lead IG analyses from UN OCHA, IOM

IRAQ CRISIS

During this quarter, humanitarian assistance in Iraq focused on responding to the needs of IDPs that remained displaced from Mosul, while also providing for new IDPs from Tal Afar, and preparing for IDPs flows out of Hawija and western Anbar province.⁸ According to the IOM, while IDP numbers across Iraq decreased by more than 100,000 this quarter as a result of returns to Mosul, significant challenges remained in the city, including the destruction of infrastructure, continued instability, the threat of explosive remnants of war, and a lack of services and livelihood opportunities, which drove some returnees back to IDP camps.⁹

Despite ISIS's defeat, sections of west Mosul remained highly insecure, with limited civilian presence.¹⁰ The threat posed by explosive remnants of war was significant, with the UN estimating that fully clearing Mosul of unexploded ordnance could take a decade given the complexity of many of the explosive devices in the city.¹¹ Despite the challenges, more than 280,000 IDPs in Ninewa province, where Mosul is located, have returned home as a result of a gradual restoration of services, including education, electricity, safe drinking water, and the reopening of markets in eastern Mosul.¹² Humanitarian organizations are working to create livable conditions in Mosul, trucking almost 800,000 gallons of drinking water per day into the city, for example.¹³

Despite improvements in conditions inside the city, more than 800,000 Mosul IDPs remained displaced, including nearly 350,000 who were living in IDP camps, according to Iraq's Ministry of Migration and Displacement.¹⁴ The number of people residing in IDP camps around Mosul has remained relatively constant, underscoring not only the difficulty of returning home for many residents, but also new displacement from the Tal Afar area.¹⁵ The September 25 KRG referendum on independence disrupted the process of returning IDPs to Mosul, as Kurdish authorities halted all returns of IDPs living in camps in Kurdish-controlled territory east of Mosul. Prior to the halt in their return, about 1,000 IDPs per day had returned to Mosul from these areas.¹⁶

KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN IRAQ

■ PROVIDING FOR BASIC NEEDS IN AND AROUND MOSUL

Humanitarian organizations provided aid to more than 800,000 Mosul residents who remained displaced from the city, and to 280,000 people who had returned home following ISIS's defeat.¹⁷

■ TAL AFAR AND HAWIJA BECOME SOURCES OF NEW DISPLACEMENT

The ISF liberation of Tal Afar and Hawija caused new waves of displacement and increased demand for humanitarian assistance around those former ISIS strongholds.¹⁸

KEY CHALLENGES IN IRAQ

■ IRAQIS ARE FACED WITH FEW JOB OPPORTUNITIES AND MANY THREATS FROM EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR

A lack of opportunity to earn money, coupled with continued instability and the threat from leftover unexploded ordnance, drove some Mosul residents who had returned home to move back into IDP camps and prevented others from returning home in the first place. As a result, humanitarian organizations continued to provide aid to Mosul residents.¹⁹



Residents of a recently liberated neighborhood in west Mosul. (U.S. Army photo)

To the west of Mosul, humanitarian organizations prepared to respond to the needs of a projected 10,000 to 40,000 Tal Afar residents expected to leave the city as the ISF battled ISIS.²⁰ By the time the fighting started on August 20, however, only a few thousand civilians remained in the city.²¹ Military operations concluded in 8 days, with the government capturing the city.²² IDPs travelled long distances to reach mustering points to congregate, with some walking as long as 20 hours.²³

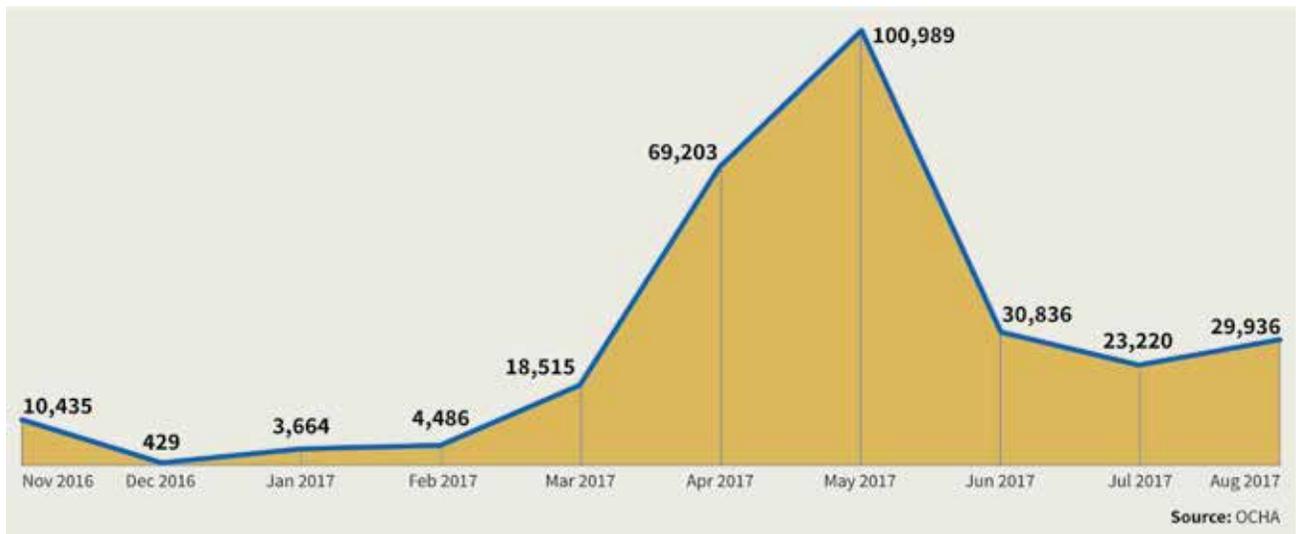
Humanitarian organizations also focused on preparing for IDPs to leave ISIS's remaining strongholds in Hawija and western Anbar.²⁴ While roughly 100,000 people have fled Hawija since August 2016, an estimated 85,000 people remained in the region.²⁵ On September 21, as the ISF began pushing into Hawija, humanitarian organizations mobilized rapid response teams at mustering points for IDPs fleeing to Salah ad Din and Kirkuk provinces, and prepositioned relief and shelter supplies.²⁶

SYRIA CRISIS

Fighting in Raqqah and Dayr az Zawr province continued to result in displacement in Syria during the quarter.²⁷ In western Syria, al Qaeda-dominated HTS captured key areas of Idlib province, creating new challenges for humanitarian actors attempting to carry out work without interference.²⁸ The Syrian Network for Human Rights documented 2,498 civilian deaths during the quarter, 328 fewer than the previous quarter, although there was an uptick in reported civilian deaths in September.²⁹

This quarter, OFDA, FFP, and PRM partners, including several UN agencies, worked to provide multi-sectoral assistance throughout Syria and the region.

Figure 4.

Monthly Displacement from Raqqah Province, November 2016-August 2017

Eastern Syria remained a center of displacement, primarily from Raqqah as the SDF advanced into the city, and from Dayr az Zawr province, as Syrian regime forces reached a previously besieged pocket of Dayr az Zawr city.³⁰ Displacement from Raqqah province decreased relative to the previous quarter, peaking at over 100,000 in May 2017, before declining to 23,000 in July 2017 as the SDF captured the majority of the provincial capital.³¹ The majority of new displacement into Raqqah province came from the Dayr az Zawr area.³²

Protection concerns increased in eastern Syria, as shifting frontlines resulted in additional displacement.³³ IDP screening processes took 2 to 3 weeks in some instances, while some IDPs had their identification confiscated during screening or transit, limiting their freedom of movement.³⁴ The physical safety of IDPs was also a concern, as displaced people continued to report encountering explosive remnants of war and forced conscription of men and boys at checkpoints.³⁵ Health care was another significant concern at IDP camps in Raqqah and Dayr az Zawr, as almost all camps struggled to provide healthcare services to the increasing influx of IDPs. Diseases, including leishmaniasis and acute diarrhea, were reportedly widespread, particularly among children.³⁶

KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN SYRIA**■ FIGHTING IN RAQQAH CAUSES DISPLACEMENT, CREATES DESPERATE CONDITIONS**

The SDF's advance into Raqqah City caused people to flee north into SDF-controlled territory and created desperate conditions for the approximately 15,000 people trapped in ISIS-controlled parts of the city that remained without adequate food, water, or medical supplies.³⁷

■ HUMANITARIAN AID IS TEMPORARILY HALTED IN IDLIB PROVINCE

The transport of humanitarian aid into Idlib was briefly halted after HTS captured key areas of the province.³⁸

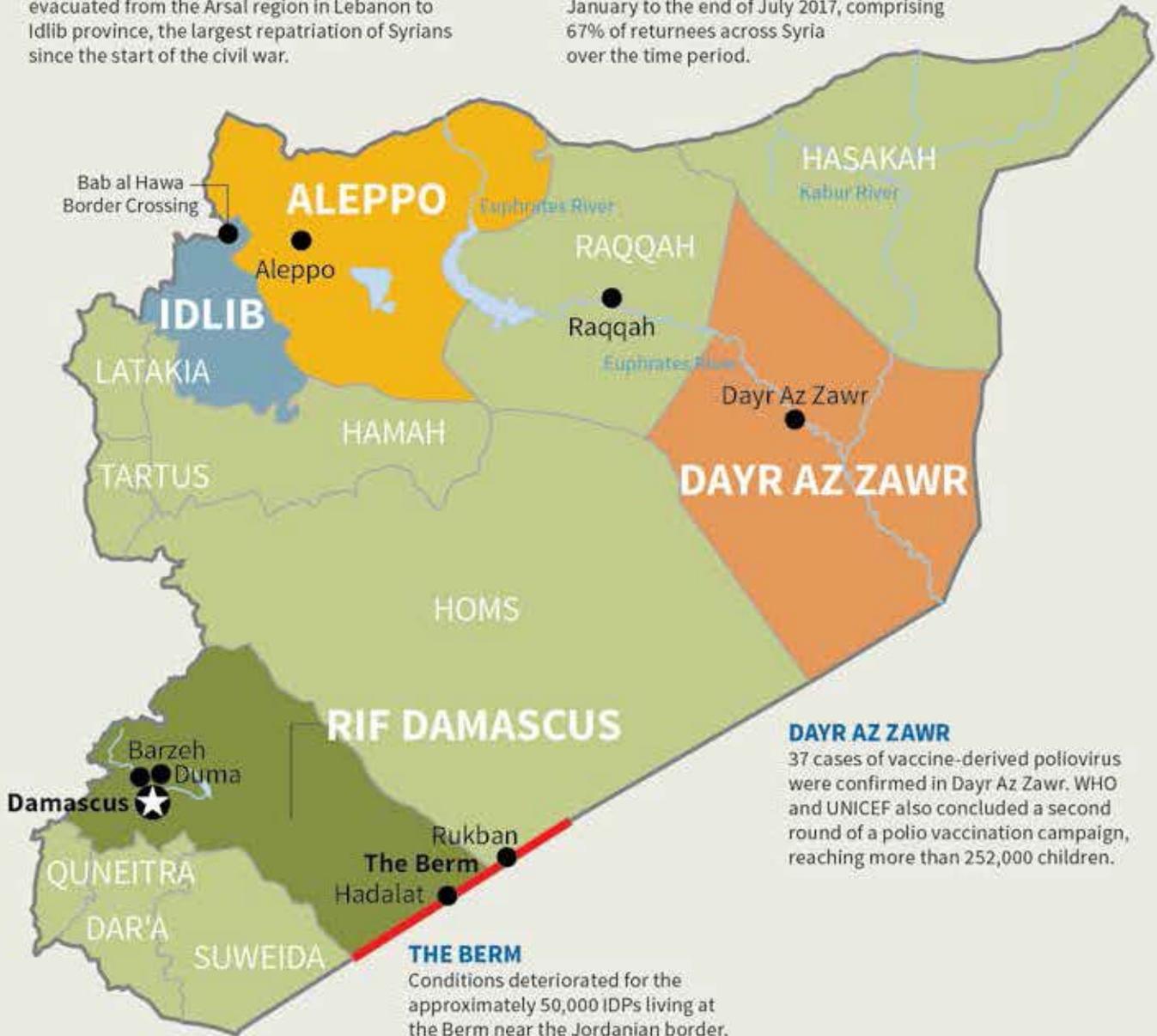
SYRIA: QUARTERLY FOCUS OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

IDLIB

Following negotiations between Hezbollah and HTS, 5,000–8,000 HTS fighters and refugees were evacuated from the Arsal region in Lebanon to Idlib province, the largest repatriation of Syrians since the start of the civil war.

ALEPPO

More than 405,000 IDPs returned to their areas of origin in Aleppo province from January to the end of July 2017, comprising 67% of returnees across Syria over the time period.



DAYR AZ ZAWR

37 cases of vaccine-derived poliovirus were confirmed in Dayr Az Zawr. WHO and UNICEF also concluded a second round of a polio vaccination campaign, reaching more than 252,000 children.

THE BERM

Conditions deteriorated for the approximately 50,000 IDPs living at the Berm near the Jordanian border. Approximately 6,000 IDPs living in the informal Hadalat settlement were forced to relocate due to increased attacks by the Syrian regime, and many fled to Rukban, exacerbating an already difficult humanitarian situation for the 50,000 Rukban residents.

RIF DAMASCUS

UN convoys delivered humanitarian aid to 55,000 people in the besieged rebel-controlled towns of Duma and Barzeh.

Sources: Lead IG analyses from USAID, UN HCR.

ISIS prevented civilians from fleeing areas under its control by laying landmines and directing sniper fire at them, which resulted in increased civilian exposure to airstrikes and ground operations.

Approximately 15,000 civilians trapped in the ISIS-controlled portion of Raqqah city before the city was recaptured from ISIS faced extremely difficult conditions due to severe shortages of food, water, and medical supplies.³⁹ Civilians in the city also lacked power due to shortages of fuel for generators and drew unsafe water from improvised wells.⁴⁰ ISIS prevented civilians from fleeing areas under its control by laying landmines and directing sniper fire at them, which resulted in increased civilian exposure to airstrikes and ground operations.⁴¹

Increasing numbers of IDPs left Dayr az Zawr province as fighting intensified in the area. The Syrian regime's push into Dayr az Zawr city sent IDPs fleeing north, often to IDP facilities in Raqqah and Hasakah provinces.⁴² The Syrian government's advance into Dayr az Zawr city also opened a land route into a formerly besieged area containing over 90,000 civilians.⁴³ This allowed the UN to replace airdrops of food assistance into the city with more cost effective overland deliveries via trucks.⁴⁴ The Syrian regime's advance into Dayr az Zawr city also reduced the number of people living under siege in Syria from 540,000 to 419,920.⁴⁵

In Idlib province, HTS seized control of key areas and indicated that it would take over municipal services in some areas.⁴⁶ The fighting between HTS and its rivals in mid-July led to a temporary 6-day closure of the Bab al-Hawa border crossing with Turkey through which humanitarian shipments enter Idlib province.⁴⁷ After fighting died down, the crossing reopened, and humanitarian organizations were able to resume shipments.⁴⁸ HTS allowed humanitarian actors to continue delivering their assistance largely unimpeded.⁴⁹

However, HTS's consolidation of power has increased the potential for humanitarian activity to provide material as well as reputational benefit to HTS through diversion of aid or by claiming credit for humanitarian work occurring in its area of control.⁵⁰ To ensure that humanitarian programming does not become compromised in Idlib's new operating environment, USAID reported that it has enhanced its program monitoring efforts, including the use of third-party monitors, and is promoting information sharing and coordination among relief agencies. It has also increased public relations staffing to ensure that HTS does not receive credit for humanitarian programming.⁵¹ USAID and the DoS plan to continue addressing humanitarian needs in HTS-controlled areas of northwestern Syria, where USAID-funded food assistance is supporting an estimated 769,000 people, using increased risk mitigation efforts to keep its programming safe.⁵²

KEY CHALLENGES IN SYRIA

■ SYRIAN IDPS FACED OBSTACLES AT SCREENING SITES AND CAMPS

Protection advocates reported that people fleeing to areas controlled by the U.S.-backed SDF spent as much as two weeks at screening sites waiting to register as IDPs, and that in some instances authorities confiscated identification cards, limiting an IDP's freedom of movement. Humanitarian organizations worked with the SDF to rectify these issues.⁵³

■ HTS CONTROL IN IDLIB FORCES RELIANCE ON THIRD-PARTY MONITORING

Humanitarian organizations operating in Idlib province conducted programming in an area controlled by a designated terrorist organization, forcing them to strengthen third party monitoring and publicity to prevent HTS from benefiting from humanitarian organization programming.⁵⁴





Sailors work on the flight deck aboard the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz in the Arabian Gulf. (U.S. Navy photo)

COMPLETED OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

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COMPLETED OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

As required by Section 8L of the Inspector General Act, the Lead IG is responsible for planning, conducting, and reporting on the oversight of overseas contingency operations. This section of the report provides information on Lead IG staffing, outreach efforts by Lead IG agencies, and strategic planning; completed Lead IG and partner agency oversight work related to audits, inspections, and evaluations; Lead IG investigative activity; and the OIGs' hotline activities from July 1, 2017, through September 30, 2017.

LEAD IG STAFFING

The Lead IG agencies use dedicated, rotational, and temporary employees as well as contractors to conduct oversight projects, investigate fraud and corruption, and perform various operational activities such as strategic planning and reporting. Following an expeditionary workforce model, some oversight staff from the Lead IG agencies are stationed in offices in Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, and Germany. Oversight teams from these offices and from offices in the United States travel to Jordan, Turkey, and other locations in the region to conduct fieldwork for their projects.

OUTREACH

Outreach and coordination continue to be important aspects of Lead IG's mission. During the quarter, the Lead IG agencies held high-level meetings with oversight partners to coordinate oversight efforts and participated in activities to share the Lead IG model with new audiences. Senior Lead IG officials, representing the DoD OIG, DoS OIG, and USAID OIG, regularly meet with policy officials, collect information, and conduct research related to OIR's military, governance, and humanitarian assistance activities.

Whole-of-Government Meetings to Engage Lead IG Partners

Both the previous and current Administrations recognized the importance of the whole of government effort in the mission to defeat ISIS. Past and current Presidential memos detail various agency responsibilities in OIR and the global mission to defeat ISIS. The Department of the Treasury (Treasury) conducts programs to disrupt ISIS finances. The Department of Justice (DoJ) conducts programs to disrupt ISIS networks and stop the flow of foreign terrorist fighters. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) programs are focused on protecting the homeland.

As a result, during this quarter, the Acting DoD IG, the DoS IG, and the USAID IG met with IGs of other agencies to discuss Lead IG oversight and opportunities for continued coordination.

In July, the IGs met with the Treasury IG to discuss the Lead IG mission, the DoD's role in countering terrorist finances, and oversight of counterterrorism, and other agency programs

in support of OCOs, and to encourage the Treasury IG to conduct oversight of Treasury activities related to OCOs.

Similarly, in August, the IGs met with the DoJ IG to discuss the DoJ's role in stopping the flow of foreign terrorist fighters back into the United States and other countries, the Administration's new Defeat ISIS Taskforce, and the oversight of agency programs in support of OCOs. The DoJ IG is the Chair of the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency and responsible for naming a Lead IG after an OCO has been designated.

In September, the IGs met with the DHS IG to discuss DHS's role in protecting the homeland from terrorist activities and ideas for increasing oversight of DHS programs and efforts in support of OCOs.

USAID IG Meetings with International Organizations and Project Implementers

The USAID IG is engaging directly with recipients of USAID funds as part of a larger strategy aimed at ensuring that the international development community understands USAID's role in protecting U.S. Government funds through proper, well-resourced oversight systems and proactive information sharing. USAID OIG interacts with the private and public sectors through a mix of senior-level bilateral meetings, working groups, and roundtable discussions.

In July, the USAID IG traveled to Geneva and Rome to meet with senior management officials and Inspectors General from five UN agencies (the World Health Organization, International Organization for Migration, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme, and the Food and Agriculture Organization), USAID staff, and Charge' d'Affaires at the U.S. missions to the UN. During these meetings, they discussed the internal oversight structures within the different UN agencies and established deeper connections between the USAID OIG and the various oversight bodies at these agencies. These meetings underscored the important role that the U.S. missions play in overseeing UN agencies, and allowed the USAID IG to communicate the high priority that the USAID OIG places on oversight of funds sent to international organizations.

Other Outreach Activities

In September, the DoD Deputy IG for Overseas Contingency Operations was interviewed on the television program Government Matters, regarding how the Lead IG was established, opportunities for collaborating with multiple offices of inspector general, and oversight planning and reporting responsibilities.

The Partnership for Public Service and Booz Allen Hamilton are conducting a study on interagency cooperation and interviewed senior representatives from the DoD, the DoS, and USAID OIGs regarding Lead IG activities.

Investigative briefings and the hotlines are other avenues for outreach that are discussed later in this section.

COMPLETED AUDIT, INSPECTION, AND EVALUATION REPORTS

Lead IG agencies and their partners completed five reports related to OIR from July 1, 2017, through September 30, 2017. These projects examined various activities in support of OIR, including contract management, reward payments, and weapons destruction.

Final Reports

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL OVERSIGHT

U.S. Africa Command's Management of Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreements

DODIG-2017-121; September 21, 2017

The DoD IG conducted this audit to determine whether the U.S. Africa Command effectively managed Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) transactions for logistics support, supplies, and services. The ACSAs are bilateral agreements between the United States and authorized foreign entities for the exchange of logistics support, supplies, and services. The agreements allow logistical exchanges between the United States and the military forces of eligible countries and international organizations.

The DoD OIG determined that U.S. Africa Command did not effectively manage the orders it executed and was not required to oversee those executed by its subordinate components in the Command's area of responsibility. Specifically, the Command and its subordinate components did not include all minimum essential data elements on these orders and upload source documents supporting line items into the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement Global Automated Tracking and Reporting System. In addition, some subordinate components did not maintain the orders in the system or track them under Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement authorities. The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics) did not monitor compliance with DoD guidance as required or establish training requirements for personnel who execute the orders. Neither the Secretary of the Navy nor the Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, issued Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement policy or program guidance, and the Command did not update its ACSA instruction. As a result, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Secretaries of Military Departments, and Commander, U.S. Africa Command, did not have assurance that logistics support, supplies, and services transactions executed in the Command's area of responsibility were accurate or reimbursed.

The DoD OIG issued various recommendations to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics), Navy, Air Force, U.S. Special Operations Command, and the U.S. Africa Command to update guidance to define oversight responsibilities and improve implementation and execution of ACSA, and develop a training program for implementation of the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement program.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics and the Command agreed with most of the recommendations and have taken steps to address them. The

Command disagreed with the finding and the recommendation to develop and implement a plan to track and maintain all orders for logistics support, supplies, and service using the Global Automated Tracking and Reporting System. The Command said that it has a procedure in place to ensure the accurate tracking. Although a process was provided, it did not mention foreign national headcount totals and the associated cash collected on-site being placed on an acquisition and cross-servicing agreement order and the order being uploaded into the Global Automated Tracking and Reporting System; therefore, the recommendation is unresolved and remains open.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL OVERSIGHT

Management Assistance Report: Additional Measures Needed at Embassy Amman to Safeguard Against Residential Fuel Loss

AUD-MERO-17-50; July 31, 2017

This Management Assistance Report is a result of the ongoing DoS OIG Audit of Jordan Fuel Acquisition and Distribution.

During an audit of fuel acquisition and related services for the U.S. Embassy in Amman, Jordan (Embassy Amman), the DoS OIG discussed its findings with the DoS contracting officer's representatives overseeing fuel-related contracts, who stated that they started to identify inconsistent fuel use (for the purpose of this report, the OIG defines "inconsistent diesel fuel use" as extreme variations in usage amounts or diesel fuel use that conflicts with the amount of fuel that the embassy estimated should be used between measurements) in December 2014. In response, the contracting officer's representatives began implementing measures intended to safeguard the residential fuel. For example, the contracting officer's representatives at Embassy Amman required landlords to install cages around the fuel tanks at 21 residences. They also required the landlord install video surveillance cameras at some of the residences. The DoS IG found that while these measures were intended to safeguard the fuel from unauthorized access, they were ineffective because OIG auditors were easily able to circumvent the safeguards and access the fuel lines. As a result, Embassy Amman residences may be susceptible to potential fuel theft or other loss caused by ineffective controls.

In addition, the DoS OIG auditors calculated that after a delivery, the levels of fuel in the tanks at the Embassy Amman employees' residences tended to be, on average, 3.25 times higher than the fuel levels maintained in the Jordanian residents' tanks, which are located in the same buildings. The large quantities of fuel maintained by the embassy residents make them particularly vulnerable to potential fuel theft or other losses.

The DoS OIG made three recommendations to Embassy Amman. Two recommendations advised the embassy to procure, install, and implement procedures for real-time fuel monitoring devices that would detect and notify Embassy Amman oversight personnel when inconsistent fuel use occurs. A third recommendation advised the embassy to adjust fuel levels based on seasonal needs.

In response to a draft of this report, Embassy Amman concurred with the three recommendations and stated that it has taken action to implement each recommendation.

Based on the actions taken and planned, the DoS OIG considers each recommendation resolved pending further action.

***Audit of the Process to Approve, Disburse, and Report Rewards for Justice Payments
AUD-SI-17-48; August 2, 2017***

The DoS OIG conducted an audit to determine whether the DoS approved, disbursed, and accurately reported to Congress Rewards for Justice Program reward payments in accordance with Federal requirements and Department guidance. The Bureau of Diplomatic Security administers the program, and a Rewards for Justice lead coordinator directs the program.

Since its inception in 1984, the Rewards for Justice Program has disbursed more than \$125 million in reward payments to more than 80 people who provided actionable information that led to the arrest of terrorists or prevented acts of international terrorism worldwide. Many of the individuals against which rewards are offered are al Qaeda and ISIS members. The Department disbursed 19 Rewards for Justice payments relating to FYs 2013, 2014, and 2015, totaling approximately \$22.7 million. The DoS OIG determined that the Department did not always report the Rewards for Justice payments to Congress on time, as required, nor did the Department submit annual reports to Congress on total program expenditures, as required.

The DoS OIG made three recommendations to the Bureau of Diplomatic Security to address control weaknesses identified with the Rewards for Justice Program that pertain to congressional reporting requirements. DoS OIG recommended that the Bureau identify congressional reporting requirements, develop a process to implement in coordination with the nominating department or agency to ensure timely congressional reporting, and identify and report on the full resources required to operate the program.

The Bureau agreed with all three recommendations and they are considered resolved, pending further action.

***Audit of the Conventional Weapons Destruction Program in Afghanistan, Iraq,
and Lebanon***

AUD-MERO-17-49; August 9, 2017

The DoS OIG conducted an audit to determine whether the Bureau of Political Military Affairs, Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement, is complying with Federal and DoS guidance and its own policies and procedures in overseeing its conventional weapons destruction grants and cooperative agreements in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Lebanon, and whether the Bureau was collecting information that effectively measures progress toward the grants' objectives.

The DoS OIG found that the Bureau of Political Military Affairs, Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement was not fully complying with its own policies and procedures for overseeing grants in these countries. The DoS OIG also found that the Bureau did not always follow monitoring requirements outlined in the DoS Federal Assistance Policy Directive, Grants Policy Directives, or its own policies and procedures. Additionally, The DoS OIG found that the Bureau did not develop expected outcomes or target levels of achievement to effectively measure performance of the Conventional Weapon Destruction Program.

The DoS OIG made seven recommendations to strengthen Bureau of Political Military Affairs, Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement, grant oversight, and improve grant management. DoS OIG recommended that the Bureau of Political Military Affairs conduct risk assessments and develop monitoring plans for five grants included in the audit; conduct annual reviews of all risk assessments included in the audit; develop and implement internal controls to enforce the annual review and update of risk assessments and monitoring plans; develop a risk-mitigation strategy for all risks identified in 10 of the audited grants; develop and implement internal controls to enforce procedures that require reviews of both performance progress reports and Federal financial reports; develop and implement procedures to obtain, review, and document in the corresponding grant files the reports prepared by the independent National Mine Actions Centers to enhance oversight of the grantees' performance and the grant terms and conditions are followed; and develop and implement internal controls to require the development of objectives with expected outcomes and target levels of achievement.

The Bureau agreed with six of the recommendations. Three recommendations are considered resolved pending further action and three are considered closed. The Bureau provided an acceptable alternative course of action to the disputed recommendation, hence the DoS OIG considers this recommendation resolved pending further action.

DoD OIG's Compendium of Unimplemented Recommendations

This quarter, the DoD OIG issued its first Compendium of Open Office of the Inspector General Recommendations to the DoD. The Compendium summarized all recommendations issued by the DoD OIG to DoD Components that remained open as of March 31, 2017. The Compendium contained a total of 1,298 open recommendations that were issued to 46 DoD Components in 288 DoD OIG audit and evaluation reports. DoD management had previously agreed to take corrective action on 1,251 of those recommendations. For the remaining 47 open recommendations, the DoD OIG and DoD Components had not agreed on an acceptable corrective action that met the intent of the DoD OIG recommendation. Of the 1,298 open recommendations, 58 had associated potential monetary benefits, which, if implemented, could have potentially saved the DoD \$33.6 billion. Collectively, five Components (Army, Air Force, Navy; Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics; and the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness) had 733 open recommendations, which represent 56 percent of all open recommendations.

(continued on next page)

DoD OIG'S Compendium of Unimplemented Recommendations *(continued from previous page)*

Table 5.

Unimplemented Recommendations by DoD Component

DoD Component	Number of Unimplemented Recommendations
U.S. Central Command	29
Department of the Army	25
Department of the Air Force	9
OUSD Acquisitions, Technology & Logistics	6

The Compendium noted that timely implementation of agreed-upon corrective actions is critical for DoD Components to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of DoD programs and operations. Furthermore, implementing agreed-upon corrective actions in a timely manner helps DoD Components achieve integrity and accountability goals, reduce costs, manage risks, realize monetary benefits, and improve management processes.

The DoD and its senior managers reacted positively to the Compendium. Because of the Compendium, the DoD OIG received numerous responses discussing actions that DoD organizations are taking, or will take, to address open recommendations. The DoD OIG is evaluating these responses to determine whether the recommendations can be closed or whether additional action is needed to fully address the recommendations.

Eighty-seven, or six percent of the total unimplemented recommendations highlighted in the compendium, stemmed from previously submitted reports on the two current OCOs: OIR and Operation Freedom's Sentinel (OFS). The 87 open recommendations were issued to 13 DoD components through 24 reports.

Table 5 shows the four DoD components with the most open recommendations. These four components collectively have 69 open recommendations, which represent 79 percent of all open recommendations. Because of the scope of OCO projects, the majority of recommendations from OCO reports are typically directed to U.S. CENTCOM and DoD service components

Timely implementation of agreed-upon corrective actions is critical to effect positive change on the Department's programs and operations. This is especially true in the fast-paced environment of OCOs. Of the 87 open recommendations, DoD management agreed to take corrective action on all but four. These four recommendations are considered unresolved until DoD management agrees to implement the recommendation or an alternative corrective action, or another outcome is decided during a formal resolution process.

INVESTIGATIONS

The investigative components of the Lead IG agencies and partner agencies continued to conduct investigative activity related to OIR during the quarter. The Lead IG agencies used forward-deployed investigators in Kuwait, Qatar, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates, as well as in Germany and Washington, D.C., to conduct these investigations.

Investigative Activity

During the quarter, the Lead IG investigative components and the military investigative organizations closed six and initiated nine new investigations related to bribery or kickback allegations, destruction of government property, false statements, and dealing with combating trafficking-in-persons allegations. All of these cases dealt with allegations related to OIR-related contracts. USAID also has open investigations related to diversions to designated terrorist organizations and corruption in stabilization programs.

The Fraud and Corruption Investigative Working Group, consisting of representatives from the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS, the DoD OIG's investigative division), the DoS OIG, USAID OIG, the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, coordinate and de-conflict their investigations of OIR-related programs and operations. During this quarter, the representatives coordinated on 86 open investigations involving allegations of procurement or program fraud, corruption, theft, and trafficking in persons.

A consolidated look at the activities of these investigative components during this quarter can be found in the dashboard on page 70.

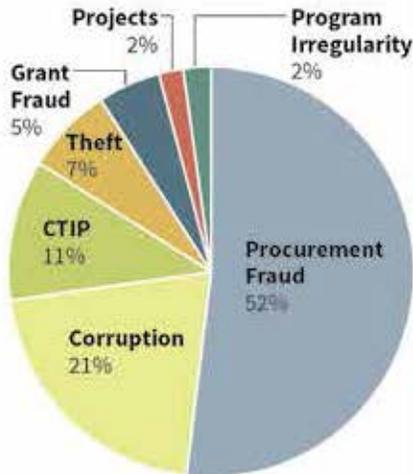
DOD CONTRACTOR DEFRAUDS U.S. GOVERNMENT AND PAYS \$249 MILLION IN FINES, PENALTIES, AND LOSES FINAL APPEAL

In a joint investigation with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Army Criminal Investigation Command, Agility Public Warehousing Co. KSC (Agility), a Kuwaiti company, agreed to globally resolve criminal, civil, and administrative cases arising from allegations that Agility overcharged the United States when performing contracts with the DoD to supply food for U.S. troops from 2003 through 2010. As part of the global resolution, Agility paid \$95 million to resolve civil fraud claims, to forego administrative claims against the United States seeking \$249 million in additional payments under its military food contracts, and plead guilty to a criminal misdemeanor offense for theft of government funds.

Since 2006, Agility has filed a number of contract claims seeking additional payments of \$249 million, alleging that the Defense Logistics Agency owed Agility payments for its performance under a series of military contracts, which the Defense Logistics Agency

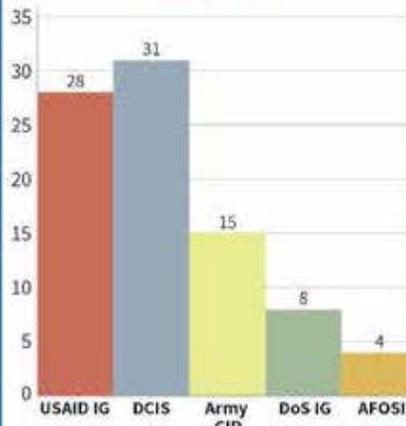
ACTIVITY BY FRAUD AND CORRUPTION INVESTIGATIVE WORKING GROUP

OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE
As of September 30, 2017

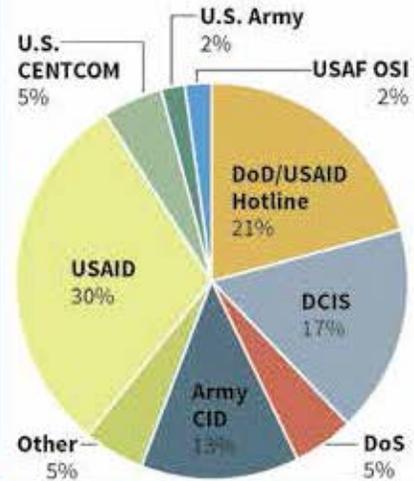


OPEN INVESTIGATIONS
86

OPEN INVESTIGATIONS BY WORKING GROUP MEMBER*



SOURCES OF ALLEGATIONS



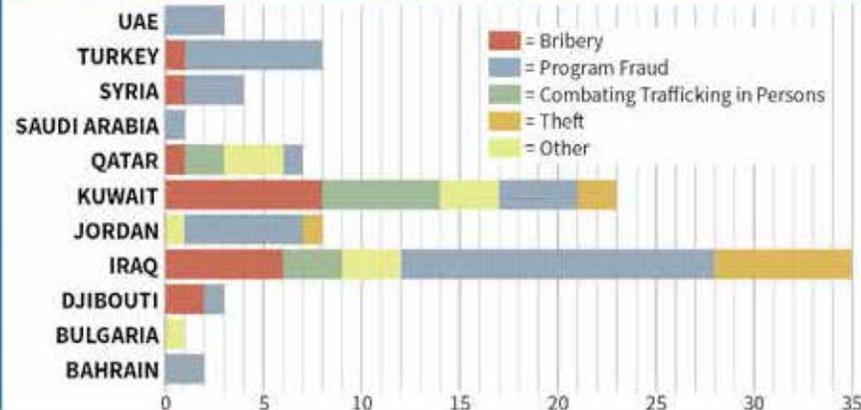
Q4 FY 2017 RESULTS

Arrests	—
Criminal Charges	1
Criminal Convictions	1
Savings/Recoveries	\$2,592,221
Suspensions/Debarments	15
Job Terminations	2
Personnel Actions	19
Other Administrative	18

Q4 FY 2017 BRIEFINGS

No. of Briefings	28
No. of Attendees	386

PRIMARY OFFENSE LOCATIONS



*Some investigations are joint with more than one agency and some not joint with any other agency. Therefore, the total number of Joint Open Cases may not equal the total number of Open Cases. Open Cases as of 9/30/2017. Note: Cumulative since 1/1/2015.



USAID IG Ann Calvaresi Barr addressing compliance officials at a Fraud Prevention, Reporting, and Compliance Roundtable in July 2017. (USAID photo)

contested in protracted litigation. Following Agility's criminal indictment by a grand jury, on November 16, 2009, the Defense Logistics Agency suspended Agility from Government contracting because of the criminal indictment. This suspension was subsequently extended to Agility's more than 300 affiliated entities. In August 2017, Agility lost their final appeal and must release all claims against Defense Logistics Agency-related to the contracts.

USAID OIG CONDUCTS OUTREACH TO FIGHT FRAUD IN IRAQ HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMS

In FY 2017, USAID provided more than \$361 million for the humanitarian response in Iraq, spread across the health; shelter; relief commodities; water, sanitation, and hygiene; protection; and food assistance sectors.

In July, to enhance oversight on USAID-funded humanitarian programs in Iraq, the USAID OIG held a fraud prevention, reporting, and compliance roundtable in Washington, D.C., to discuss trends, best practices, division of roles, and expectations regarding fraud prevention, compliance, and reporting. This event brought together key players who work to protect USAID funds, namely representatives from USAID OIG; the Agency's senior leadership, the Compliance Division, and General Counsel; and more than 60 officials from over 40 development organizations.

In September, USAID OIG investigators, analysts, and auditors conducted outreach to USAID staff and implementers in the cities of Baghdad and Erbil in Iraq. During the trip, the team met with U.S. Embassy staff, including members of the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team and USAID/Iraq staff managing USAID-funded stabilization programs, to develop a greater understanding of the Agency's programs and their vulnerability to fraud, waste, and abuse.

USAID OIG staff also reached out to representatives from public international organizations such as the World Health Organization and the UNDP, as well as USAID implementers. The team conducted 10 fraud awareness briefings for 289 participants from USAID and implementing partners, and visited more than 11 implementer offices and warehouses, assessing the strength of their procurement and logistics systems and identifying potential areas of concern.

OIG INVESTIGATION LEADS TO PRE-AWARD SUSPENSION, SCRUTINY OF A USAID AWARD RECIPIENT’S PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

In September 2016, USAID OIG received an allegation related to corruption and collusion by sub-contractors working on cross-border humanitarian assistance programs in Syria. These organizations were allegedly linked to an individual involved in manipulating procurement tenders by USAID-funded non-governmental organizations through the use of numerous companies. Because of the findings uncovered during the investigation, OIG issued an interim referral to USAID’s Office of Food for Peace. As a result, Food for Peace delayed its \$13.5 million award to the prime implementer in August 2017 because of concerns regarding the implementer’s procurement structures and its sub-contractor’s warehouse practices, and strongly advised against procuring under the pre-award letter, effectively halting program activities. The case is open and ongoing.

HOTLINE ACTIVITY

Each Lead IG agency maintains its own hotline to receive complaints and contacts specific to its agency. The OIGs’ hotlines provide a confidential, reliable means for individuals to report violations of law, rule, or regulation; mismanagement; gross waste of funds; and abuse of authority for independent review.

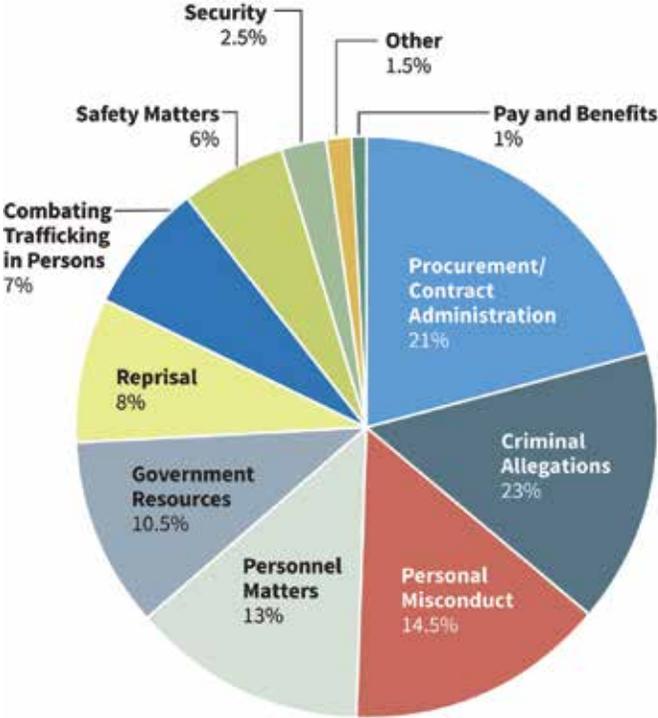
The OIG hotline representatives process the complaints they receive and refer these complaints to the appropriate entity in accordance with their respective protocols. Any hotline complaint that merits referral is sent to the responsible organization for investigation or informational purposes.

The DoD OIG employs an investigator to coordinate the hotline contacts received among the Lead IG agencies and others, as appropriate. During the reporting period, the investigator received and coordinated numerous complaints, which subsequently resulted in the opening of 81 cases (not all complaints lead to an open case). The cases were referred within the DoD OIG, other Lead IG agencies, and the Service IG entities. Some complaints include numerous allegations that result in multiple cases.

As noted in Figure 5, the majority of the complaints received during this quarter related to personal misconduct and other personnel matters, criminal allegations, and procurement or contract administration irregularities.

Figure 5.

Hotline Activity







A U.S. Marine Corps F/A-18 Hornet during a mission in support of OIR.
(U.S. Air Force photo)

ONGOING AND PLANNED OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

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ONGOING AND PLANNED OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

This section of the report discusses the ongoing Lead IG strategic planning process as well as ongoing and planned audit, inspection, and evaluation work. The ongoing and planned oversight projects, as of September 30, 2017, are listed in separate tables.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Pursuant to Section 8L of the Inspector General Act, the Lead IG is required to develop and carry out a joint strategic plan to guide comprehensive oversight of programs and operations for each OCO and to provide each plan to Congress annually. This effort includes reviewing and analyzing completed oversight, management, and other relevant reports to identify systemic problems, trends, lessons learned, and best practices to inform future oversight projects.

The Southwest Asia Joint Planning Group Meets Quarterly

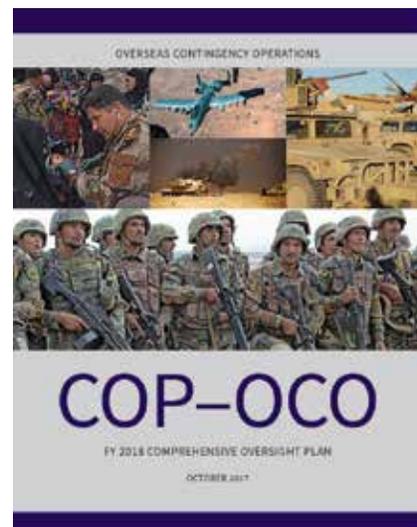
On July 27, 2017, the Joint Planning Group held its 39th meeting, at which the Director, Directorate of Strategic Operational Planning, National Counterterrorism Center, discussed the National Counterterrorism Center's role in defeating ISIS. The second half of the meeting addressed the ongoing and planned oversight projects as well as those projects nearing completion.

To inform the planning activities and coordinate projects among oversight entities, the Southwest Asia Joint Planning Group, which began in 2008, serves as a primary vehicle to coordinate audits, inspections, and evaluations throughout Southwest Asia. The group is a forum for information sharing and coordination of the broader Federal oversight community's efforts in Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, and Southwest Asia, including by the military service IGs, the Government Accountability Office (GAO), and the service audit agencies.

FY 2018 Oversight Plan

In 2014, upon designation of the Lead IG for OIR, the three Lead IG agencies began developing and carrying out a joint strategic plan for comprehensive oversight of OIR. The FY 2018 Joint Strategic Oversight Plan for Operation Inherent Resolve, effective October 1, 2017, was included in the FY 2018 Comprehensive Oversight Plan for Overseas Contingency Operations. The plan organizes OIR-related oversight projects into strategic oversight areas (SOAs). The 2018 oversight plan has updated SOAs that reflect the evolving OIR mission and fall into the following areas:

**FY 2018
Comprehensive
Oversight Plan
for Overseas
Contingency
Operations**





155 mm rounds are prepared for movement at Forward Operating Base Shalalot, Iraq. (U.S. Army Photo)

SECURITY

The Security SOA focuses on determining the degree to which OIR is accomplishing its mission to defeat ISIS by training, advising, and assisting the ISF and vetted Syrian opposition forces, and conducting counterterrorism operations. Activities that fall under this SOA include the following:

- Countering illegal combatants and criminal elements
- Supporting host-nation military and police, including the Iraqi Army, federal and local police, the CTS, border guard forces, tribal holding forces, the SDF, and Kurdish forces
- Providing equipment and enablers that support targeting and air operations against ISIS and affiliates
- Protecting key personnel and facilities

GOVERNANCE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

The Governance and Civil Society SOA focuses on the ability of the host-nation government, at all levels, to represent and serve its citizens. Activities that fall under this SOA may include the following:

- Building or enhancing those nations' governance capacity, including the capacity to pay for their activities and services
- Promoting inclusive and effective democracy, and civil participation and empowerment
- Promoting reconciliation, peaceful conflict resolution, demobilization and reintegration of armed forces, and other rule of law efforts

- Fostering sustainable and appropriate economic development activities
- Fostering fair distribution of resources and provision of essential services
- Countering and reducing corruption, inequality, and extremism

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

The Humanitarian Assistance SOA focuses on aid intended to save lives, alleviate suffering, and maintain human dignity during and after conflict, as well as to prevent and strengthen preparedness for such crises. Distinct and separate from military operations, activities that fall under this SOA may include the following:

- Protection
- Water, sanitation, and hygiene
- Emergency food assistance
- Relief commodities
- Shelter
- Healthcare
- Education
- Emergency livelihoods
- Economic recovery
- Social cohesion
- Coordination of related logistics

STABILIZATION

The Stabilization SOA focuses on U.S. Government efforts to enable persons affected by the OCO to return to or remain in their homes with the expectation of basic security and government and public services. Activities that fall under this SOA include the following:

- Removing explosive remnants of war
- Providing security forces acceptable to local populations
- Repairing infrastructure and buildings
- Reestablishing utilities and public services
- Reestablishing local governance structures and supporting reconciliation
- Setting conditions for resumption of basic commerce
- Planning for the provision of humanitarian assistance

SUPPORT TO MISSION

The Support to Mission SOA focuses on administrative, logistical, and management efforts that enable the United States to conduct military operations, empower host-nation governance, and provide humanitarian assistance to the local population. Activities that fall under this SOA may include the following:

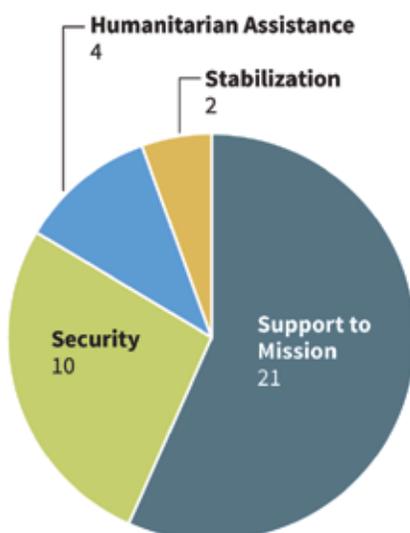
- Security of U.S. personnel and property on U.S. installations
- Occupational health and safety of personnel on U.S. installations
- Logistical support to U.S. installations
- Grant and contract management
- Program administration

ONGOING OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

As of September 30, 2017, the Lead IG agencies and their partner agencies have 31 ongoing projects directly related to OIR. Figure 5 describes the ongoing projects by strategic oversight area. Tables 6 and 7 list the project title and objective for each of these projects. Some projects are related to more than one SOA. There are no ongoing activities this quarter related to Governance and Civil Society.

Figure 5.

Ongoing Projects per Strategic Oversight Area



Note: Projects may focus on more than one SOA; therefore, totals do not represent a one-to-one correlation with the count of total projects.

Security

The DoD OIG is evaluating the OIR commander's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance processing, exploitation, and dissemination processes; evaluating various train and equip programs; and performing audits of counternarcotics activities oversight and operational contract support. The GAO is evaluating the DoD's lessons learned for the institutionalization of advise-and-assist missions; the disposition of selected U.S. assistance to Iraq's security forces; and the special operations forces operational tempo.

Humanitarian Assistance

The DoS OIG is auditing the assistance to internally displaced persons in Iraq and the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs aviation program. The USAID OIG is conducting an audit of obligations and costs incurred under USAID's overseas contingency operations relating to USAID's humanitarian assistance in Syria and neighboring countries and a follow-up audit of Syrian implementers.

Stabilization

The DoD OIG is evaluating the U.S and coalition efforts to train, advise, assist, and equip and Iraqi police hold force in support of stability operations. The USAID IG is conducting an audit of USAID’s assistance to public international organizations.

Support to Mission

The DoD OIG is evaluating DoD contracts in Kuwait and military facilities in Qatar, and is auditing programs involving defense information technology; Army equipment and emergency management; and controls over the disposition of equipment at the Defense Logistics Agency disposition services in Kuwait. The DoS IG is auditing the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs aviation program and contracts and grants; assistance to internally displaced persons in Iraq; and Jordan fuel acquisition and distribution. The Army Audit Agency is auditing overtime pay and entitlements for deployed civilians, OIR reporting obligations, and the Deployable Disbursing System. The Navy Audit Service is conducting an audit of the Department of the Navy overseas contingency operations. The Air Force Audit Agency is conducting an audit of security programs. The GAO is evaluating advise-and-assist lessons learned; U.S. assistance to Iraq’s security forces; special operations forces operational tempo; vendor vetting; and contingency funds for base needs.

Table 6.

Ongoing Oversight Projects, as of September 30, 2017

Project Title	Objective
ARMY AUDIT AGENCY	
<i>Audit of Overtime Pay and Entitlements for Deployed Civilians</i>	To verify that 1) overtime was effectively managed; and 2) downrange entitlements (to include danger and post differential pay) were accurately paid for civilians deployed in support of OFS and OIR.
<i>Audit of the Army’s Reporting of Obligations and Expenditures for Operation Inherent Resolve</i>	To verify the accuracy of the Army’s obligations and disbursements reported in the <i>Cost of War</i> report for OIR.
<i>Audit of the Deployable Disbursing System</i>	To verify that Deployable Disbursing System 1) transactions were controlled, supported, and accurately recorded; and 2) users were properly trained.
AIR FORCE AUDIT AGENCY	
<i>U.S. Air Forces Central Command Area of Responsibility Security Programs</i>	To determine whether 1) Air Force personnel effectively managed the security program at the U.S. Air Forces Central Command locations; and 2) classified storage areas and computer systems were properly protected and access to classified data was limited to those personnel with appropriate level clearances.

Project Title	Objective
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Evaluation of Airborne Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance Processing, Exploitation, and Dissemination Process for OIR</i>	To evaluate whether the OIR Commander's intelligence requirements are being satisfied by the current Airborne Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Processing, Exploitation, and Dissemination process.
<i>Evaluation of the Syria Train and Equip Program (Phase II)</i>	To 1) evaluate the Syria Train and Equip Program's compliance with provisions authorized under the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act, Section 1209; and 2) to determine the validity of a DoD Office of Inspector General Hotline complaint.
<i>Audit of Combatant Command Oversight of Counternarcotics Activities</i>	To determine whether the U.S. Africa Command and the U.S. Central Command effectively provided oversight of counternarcotics activities.
<i>Audit of Defense Information Technology Contracting Organization Contract Awards</i>	To determine whether the Defense Information Technology Contracting Organization is properly awarding telecommunication contracts.
<i>Audit of Base Support Contracts in Bahrain</i>	To determine whether the United States Navy is providing effective oversight of the base support services contracts in Bahrain.
<i>Military Facilities Evaluation-AI Udeid Air Base, Qatar</i>	To determine whether U.S. military-occupied facilities supporting overseas contingency operations comply with DoD health and safety policies and standards regarding electrical distribution, fire protection, and fuel systems.
<i>Audit of the Trans-Africa Airlift Support Contract</i>	To determine whether the DoD components effectively developed requirements for the Trans-Africa Airlift Support Contract.
<i>Audit of Management of Army Equipment in Kuwait and Qatar</i>	To determine whether the Army is effectively managing equipment in Kuwait and Qatar.
<i>Evaluation of DoD Efforts to Combat Trafficking-in-Persons at DoD Facilities in Kuwait</i>	To determine whether 1) DoD contracts in Kuwait comply with combating trafficking-in-persons requirements in statutes, the Federal Acquisition Regulations, Defense Acquisition Regulations, and other DoD guidance; and 2) DoD officials are providing effective oversight in accordance with Command responsibility and contracting regulations, including taking measures to address any instances of non-compliance.
<i>Evaluation of U.S. and Coalition Efforts to Train, Advise, Assist, and Equip an Iraqi Police Hold Force in Support of Stability Operations</i>	To assess the U.S. and Coalition efforts to train, advise, assist, and equip Iraqi Police Hold Force in support of stability operations.
<i>Audit of the Army's Emergency Management Program in Kuwait</i>	To determine whether the DoD established and maintained a comprehensive emergency management program for Army installations in Kuwait.
<i>Audit of Controls Over the Disposition of Equipment at the Defense Logistics Agency Disposition Services in Kuwait</i>	To determine whether the Defense Logistics Agency Disposition Services is properly disposing of equipment at Camp Arifjan in Kuwait.
<i>Audit of DoD Components Integration of Operational Contract Support</i>	To determine whether the combatant commands have effectively integrated operational contracting support into ongoing operations.

Project Title	Objective
DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Audit of Selected Contracts and Grants within the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs</i>	To audit the administration and oversight of contracts within the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. The OCO aspect of this audit will be humanitarian support to Syrian refugees in Turkey and/or Europe and grants/contracts supporting security screening of refugees and other travelers coming to the United States via Europe. This is one in a series of audits related to DoS’s administration of contracts and grants.
<i>Audit of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Aviation Program</i>	To determine whether the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs is administering its aviation program, including key internal controls such as inventory management, aviation asset usage, aircraft maintenance and asset disposal, in accordance with Federal requirements and Department guidelines.
<i>Audit of Jordan Fuel Acquisition and Distribution</i>	To determine whether fuel acquisition, storage, and distribution are performed in accordance with contract terms and Federal regulations and whether the Bureau of Near East Affairs is adhering to policies and procedures to ensure the safety and security of Post personnel. This audit is one in a series of audits designed to assess the oversight of fuel operations in countries supporting OCO. Fuel is a critical resource, which requires significant controls to mitigate fraud, waste, and abuse and ensure the safety and security of Post personnel.
<i>Audit of Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons in Iraq</i>	To determine whether the Bureau of Population, Migration, and Refugees has effective controls in place to ensure that U.S. funds provided for internally displaced persons in Iraq are used for their intended purposes.
<i>Audit of the Invoice Review Process for Overseas Contingency Operations Contracts –Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs</i>	To 1) determine whether invoice review policies and procedures, training, staffing, invoice review practices, and accountability measures are sufficient to support overseas contingency operations; and 2) ensure invoice payments are reviewed in accordance with Federal requirements and departmental guidance.
GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE	
<i>Disposition of Selected U.S. Assistance to Iraq’s Security Forces</i>	To determine 1) what policies and procedures are in place to ensure the accountability, physical security, and end use of U.S.-provided equipment through the Iraq Train and Equip Fund after transfer to the government of Iraq or the Kurdistan Regional Government, and to what extent are these policies and procedures being carried out; 2) what is known about the location and use of equipment provided through the Iraq Train and Equip Fund after transfer; and 3) what controls are in place to ensure the accountability of Iraq Train and Equip Fund-funded cash transfers to the government of Iraq, Kurdistan Regional government, and other recipients.

Project Title	Objective
<i>Institutionalizing Advise-and-Assist Lessons Learned</i>	To evaluate the extent to which the DoD has 1) modified its approach for planning for, training, and utilizing U.S. military personnel to advise and assist partner forces based on lessons learned from advise-and-assist efforts in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria; 2) incorporated lessons learned from challenges the DoD has faced in providing and utilizing U.S. military personnel to carry out their assigned advise-and-assist missions in support of geographic combatant commands; 3) incorporated lessons learned from past challenges they have experienced in providing key enablers for the advise-and-assist missions, including air support; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; logistics; or other enabling capabilities; and 4) assessed and institutionalized specific lessons from OIR, OFS, and other past and present advise-and-assist missions in various geographic combatant commands to identify and implement necessary changes to doctrine, training, and force structure to support ongoing and future advise-and-assist missions.
<i>Special Operations Forces Operational Tempo</i>	To determine what 1) challenges, if any, has the DoD faced in providing special operations forces to meet the requirements of the geographic combatant commands; 2) extent the DoD considers the operational tempo in prioritizing and tasking special operations forces deployments in support of U.S. Central Command operations, including determining tradeoffs between conventional and special operations forces capabilities and the requirements of other geographic combatant commands; 3) challenges, if any, has the DoD faced in providing deployed special operations forces with key enablers including, but not limited to, airlift, medical evacuation, intelligence, expeditionary base operating support, logistics, and airfield operations; 4) extent the DoD assessed the impact of special operations forces mission and deployment rates on unit readiness and the availability of special operations forces to conduct other missions and support the requirements of other geographic combatant commands; and 5) extent the reliance on overseas contingency operations funding has impacted the readiness of special operations forces and how will it continue to impact special operations forces if funding isn't shifted to the base defense budget in future years.
<i>Vendor Vetting</i>	To determine 1) the extent the DoD and its geographic combatant commands have developed guidance on vendor vetting; 2) the extent the DoD and its geographic combatant commands have established and are implementing vendor-vetting processes, including information systems involved in vendor vetting; 3) the extent the DoD and its geographic combatant commands have internal controls in place to ensure that the information used to make determinations of vendor risk, including appeals processes is complete, accurate, and timely, and available to vendors; and 4) the challenges, if any, the DoD is facing regarding vendor vetting.

Project Title	Objective
<i>Contingency Funds for Base Needs</i>	To determine the extent the DoD tracks 1) its obligation of overseas contingency operations funds used for base requirements; and 2) how overseas contingency operations funds were authorized for base requirements in FY 2016.
NAVAL AUDIT SERVICE	
<i>Department of the Navy Overseas Contingency Operations</i>	To verify 1) the Department of the Navy’s obligations and disbursements supporting overseas contingency operations are in compliance with applicable laws and regulations; and 2) internal controls were in place and functioning as intended.
U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Audit of USAID’s Assistance to Public International Organizations</i>	To determine 1) what assessment of risk USAID offices are conducting before awarding funds to public international organizations; 2) how the risks associated with awards to these organizations are mitigated; 3) how public international organization programs and funds are overseen by USAID offices; and 4) if other vulnerabilities exist with USAID assistance provided to public international organizations, notwithstanding currently established policies and procedures.
<i>Audit of USAID’s Oversight of Selected Implementer Delivering Humanitarian Assistance in Response to the Syrian Crisis</i>	To determine whether 1) USAID awarded, obligated, modified, monitored, and reported funds according to established requirements; and 2) the costs incurred were supported, allowable, allocable, and reasonable in accordance with established requirements and award provisions.
<i>Follow-up Audit of Syrian Implementers Under Investigation</i>	To determine 1) what corrective actions the selected Syria-response implementer has taken to remedy internal control weaknesses identified by investigations; and 2) if USAID eliminated oversight gaps identified by investigations of the selected Syria-response implementer.

Other Ongoing OIR-Related Oversight Projects

The DHS OIG has 10 ongoing projects evaluating DHS's efforts to protect the homeland against terrorist activities. While DHS OIG oversight focuses more broadly than OIR, many of these DHS OIG projects relate to the U.S. efforts to counter ISIS.

The DoJ OIG has three ongoing and planned projects to assess the DoJ's overall counterterrorism and national security efforts, which contribute to efforts to protect the homeland and may include efforts to counter ISIS as a part of an expansive counterterrorism effort.

Table 7.

Other Ongoing Oversight Projects Related to Efforts to Counter ISIS, as of September 30, 2017

Project Title	Objective
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Federal Air Marshal Service's Oversight of Civil Aviation Security</i>	To determine whether the Federal Air Marshal Service adequately manages its resources to detect, deter, and defeat threats to the civil aviation system.
<i>U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Screening of Aliens from Specially Designated Countries</i>	To determine whether U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement ensures the proper screening of aliens from specially designated countries.
<i>Operation Stonegarden Grants</i>	To determine whether the Federal Emergency Management Agency and U.S. Customs and Border Protection have sufficient oversight of Operation Stonegarden grants to ensure that the awarded funds are administered properly and spent effectively.
<i>Audit of Information Technology Security Controls over Cargo Areas at Airports and Ports</i>	To determine how DHS has implemented computer security controls for their systems in the cargo areas at U.S. airports and ports.
<i>Department of Homeland Security's Coordination Related to Immigration Enforcement</i>	To determine whether DHS fosters collaboration and unity of effort Department-wide to enforce and administer immigration policy.
<i>U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Searches of Electronic Devices</i>	To determine whether U.S. Customs and Border Protection is conducting searches of electronic devices at or between United States ports of entry according to required procedures.
<i>Historical Fingerprint Enrollment Identity Fraud</i>	To determine how many aliens whose fingerprints were uploaded into DHS' Automated Biometric Identification System through the Historical Fingerprint Enrollment received immigration benefits under another identity, the type of benefits they received, and their country of origin.
<i>U.S. Customs and Border Protection Border Security Information Technology</i>	To assess the effectiveness of information technology systems to support the achievement of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's border security mission objectives for preventing the entry of illegal aliens or inadmissible individuals who may pose a threat to national security.

Project Title	Objective
<i>Access Control and Security Identification Display Area Badge Covert Testing</i>	To determine whether the Transportation Security Administration implements effective requirements and procedures to safeguard the sterile areas of U.S. airports.
<i>Transportation Security Administration Carry-On Baggage Penetration Testing</i>	To determine the effectiveness of Transportation Security Administration’s carry-on baggage screening technologies and checkpoint screener performance in identifying and resolving potential security threats at airport security checkpoints.
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Efforts to Protect Seaports and Maritime Activity</i>	To review the FBI’s roles and responsibilities for 1) assessing maritime terrorism threats; 2) preventing and responding to maritime terrorist incidents; and 3) coordinating with the DHS components to ensure seaport security.
<i>Efforts to Address Homegrown Violent Extremists</i>	To 1) review the FBI’s homegrown violent extremist casework and resource management; 2) evaluate the FBI’s coordination with relevant components and its strategic and tactical policies and processes to identify and address threats; and 3) assess the FBI field divisions’ implementation of strategic and tactical policies and processes to investigate homegrown violent extremist threats.
<i>Audit of the Bureau of Prison’s Counterterrorism Efforts</i>	The preliminary objectives are to review the Bureau of Prison’s 1) policies, procedures, and practices for monitoring inmates with known or suspected ties to domestic and foreign terrorism; and 2) its efforts to prevent further radicalization among its inmate population.

PLANNED PROJECTS

As of September 30, 2017, the Lead IG agencies and their partners have 46 planned oversight projects related to OIR. Figure 6 describes the planned projects by strategic oversight area and the discussion that follows highlights some of these planned projects by the five FY 2018 strategic oversight areas. Tables 8 and 9 list the project title and objective for each of these projects.

Security

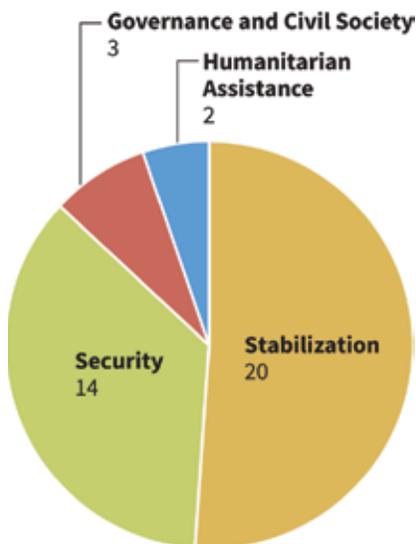
The DoD OIG will evaluate intelligence programs, social media exploitation, and remote explosives detection capability. The DoS IG will audit the antiterrorism assistance program in countries under the DoS Bureaus of Near Eastern Affairs and South and Central Asian Affairs-Iraq; grants and cooperative agreements; and for the Bureau of Diplomatic Security's invoice-review process for the Middle East. The Air Force Audit Agency will audit aviation fuels management.

Governance and Civil Society

The DoS OIG will inspect the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor and the DoS Governance and Stabilization Programs in Iraq and Syria and will audit Iraq's post-conflict development and sustainment.

Figure 6.

Planned Projects per Strategic Oversight Area



Note: Projects may focus on more than one SOA; therefore, totals do not represent a one-to-one correlation with the count of total projects.

Humanitarian Assistance

The DoS OIG will review the oversight of assistance provided in Syria. The USAID OIG will audit the USAID, Bureau of Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance oversight during a humanitarian crisis.

Stabilization

The USAID OIG will audit USAID/Iraq's stabilization activities implemented by United Nations Development Programme, and Iraq's post-conflict development and sustainment.

Support to Mission

The DoD OIG projects will assess a military facility, theater linguist support, and various contracts and will audit property management and reporting of DoD Government-furnished equipment. The DoS OIG will audit programs involving the Bureau of Diplomatic Security's invoice-review process; fuel acquisition and distribution; new consulate construction; food safety; various contracts; logistics and freight operations; protective services task orders; and property accountability. The Army Audit Agency will audit the deployable disbursing system. The Naval Audit Services will audit the Navy financial data reported for overseas contingency operations. The Air Force Audit Agency will evaluate contract administration in a contingency environment.

Table 8.

Planned Oversight Projects, as of September 30, 2017

Project Title	Objective
ARMY AUDIT AGENCY	
<i>Deployable Disbursing System Vendor Pay Phase II</i>	To verify that Deployable Disbursing System vendor payments were properly controlled, supported, and recorded.
AIR FORCE AUDIT AGENCY	
<i>Emergency Contingency Allowance Equipment, 407th Air Expeditionary Group</i>	To determine whether Wing personnel properly managed emergency contingency allowance equipment. The auditors will discuss and examine topics related to accountability, maintenance, and authorizations during this planning phase.
<i>Aviation Fuels Management</i>	To determine whether Air Force personnel properly managed aviation fuels. Specifically, to determine whether personnel properly 1) accounted for aviation fuels transactions; and 2) computed inflight-refueling requirements.
<i>Emergency Contingency Allowance Equipment</i>	To determine whether Air Force personnel properly managed emergency contingency allowance equipment. The auditors will discuss and examine topics related to accountability, maintenance, and authorizations during this planning phase.
<i>Aviation Fuels Management, 386th Air Expeditionary Wing</i>	To determine whether Wing personnel properly managed aviation fuels. Specifically, to determine whether personnel properly 1) accounted for aviation fuels transactions; and 2) computed inflight-refueling requirements.
<i>Contract Administration in a Contingency Environment, 386th Air Expeditionary Wing</i>	To determine whether Wing personnel managed contract activities in its area of responsibility in accordance with guidance. Specifically, to evaluate whether personnel 1) properly planned, competed, and awarded contingency contracts, including the Trafficking in Persons clause; 2) provided oversight and quality assurance over contractor performance, including trafficking in persons; and 3) appropriately responded to potential violations.
<i>Aviation Fuels Management, 379th Air Expeditionary Wing</i>	To determine whether Wing personnel properly managed emergency contingency allowance equipment. The auditors will discuss and examine topics related to accountability, maintenance, and authorizations during this planning phase.
<i>Emergency Contingency Allowance Equipment, 386th Air Expeditionary Wing</i>	To determine whether Wing personnel properly managed emergency contingency allowance equipment. The auditors will discuss and examine topics related to accountability, maintenance, and authorizations during this planning phase.
<i>Emergency Contingency Allowance Equipment, 379th Air Expeditionary Wing</i>	To determine whether Wing personnel properly managed emergency contingency allowance equipment. The auditors will discuss and examine topics related to accountability, maintenance, and authorizations during this planning phase.

Project Title	Objective
<i>Contract Administration in a Contingency Environment, 379th Air Expeditionary Wing</i>	To determine whether Wing personnel managed contract activities in its area of responsibility in accordance with guidance. Specifically, to evaluate whether personnel 1) properly planned, competed, and awarded contingency contracts, including Trafficking in Persons; 2) provided oversight and quality assurance over contractor performance, including Trafficking in Persons; and 3) appropriately responded to potential violations.
<i>Aviation Fuels Management, 380th Air Expeditionary Wing</i>	To determine whether Wing personnel properly managed aviation fuels. Specifically, to determine whether personnel properly 1) accounted for aviation fuels transactions; and 2) computed inflight-refueling requirements.
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Audit of the DoD Plan for Reconstruction and Stabilization in Iraq</i>	To determine whether the DoD and the DoS effectively planned and coordinated for stabilization efforts in Iraq and Syria.
<i>Evaluation of DoD Biometric-Enabled Intel Ops for OIR</i>	To determine whether biometric-enabled intelligence effectively supports the OIR Commander's requirements.
<i>Summary Report of Recommendations from OCO Intel Evaluations</i>	To determine if recommendations from the DoD Lead Inspector General for Overseas Contingency Operations intelligence evaluations affecting OIR and OFS have been implemented.
<i>Remote Explosives Detection Capability</i>	To determine whether the Defense Intelligence Agency and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency are providing appropriate specialized capabilities to remotely detect homemade explosives in accordance with DoD regulations.
<i>Under Secretary of Defense (Intelligence) and Defense Intelligence Agency Oversight of Special Intelligence Interrogation Methods</i>	To determine whether the Under Secretary of Defense (Intelligence) and Defense Intelligence Agency, are providing proper oversight of special intelligence interrogation methods according to DoD policy.
<i>DoD Integration of Operational Contract Support into Force Development and Training</i>	To determine whether the DoD effectively integrated Operational Contract Support into force development and training.
<i>Audit of the Award and Administration of the U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command DoD Language Interpretation and Translation II Contract</i>	To determine whether the U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command DoD Language Interpretation and Translation II contracts and task orders were properly awarded and administered.
<i>Audit of Property Management and Reporting of DoD Government-Furnished Equipment</i>	To determine whether the DoD has policies and procedures in place to accurately account for government-furnished equipment in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards.
<i>DoD Oversight of Private Security Contracts at Balad Air Base in Iraq</i>	To determine whether the DoD is providing effective oversight of private security contracts in Iraq.

Project Title	Objective
<i>U.S. Military Facility Evaluation—Ahmad Al Jaber Air Base, Kuwait</i>	To determine if U.S. military-occupied facilities comply with DoD health and safety policies and standards regarding electrical distribution, fire protection, and fuel systems. Additionally, to determine the validity of a DoD Office of Inspector General Hotline complaint.
<i>Evaluation of Compartmented Geospatial Intel Collection for OIR Intel Requirements</i>	To determine whether compartmented geospatial intelligence collection is being effectively used to satisfy existing collection gaps in OIR intelligence requirements.
<i>Evaluation of Theater Linguist Support for OIR and OFS</i>	To review policies and procedures impacting the recruitment, hiring, and employment of military and contract linguists on the conduct of the OIR and OFS campaigns.
<i>Evaluation of Social Media Exploitation for OIR</i>	To determine whether the DoD is effectively employing social media analytics in support of OIR.
DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Audit of Logistics and Freight Operations Provided by Pacific Architects and Engineers, Inc., in Iraq</i>	To determine whether logistics and freight are being conducted in accordance with acquisition regulations and departmental policies, are being monitored by the Department, and include fair and reasonable prices.
<i>Audit of Worldwide Protective Services Task Orders for Iraq and South Sudan</i>	To determine whether the Bureau of Diplomatic Security’s management and oversight of the Triple Canopy task order is being conducted in accordance with Federal and departmental regulations and guidelines.
<i>Audit of Aviation Working Capital Fund Cost Center</i>	To determine whether the fees collected by the Aviation Working Capital Fund cost center were sufficient to cover all costs required to sustain operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.
<i>Audit of DoS Selection and Management of Contracting Officer’s Representatives in Iraq</i>	To determine whether 1) the contracting officer’s representative nomination and selection process for Iraq considered qualified candidates as required by Federal and departmental requirements; and 2) the management structure of contracting officer’s representatives in Iraq allows for effective supervision and accountability for executing their responsibilities.
<i>Audit of Diplomatic Security’s Invoice-Review Process—Middle East</i>	To 1) determine whether the Bureau of Diplomatic Security invoice-review policies and procedures, training, staffing, and invoice-review practices and accountability measures are sufficient to support overseas contingency operations; and 2) ensure invoice payments are reviewed in accordance with Federal requirements and departmental guidance.
<i>Audit of the DoS Armored Vehicle Procurement Process</i>	To determine whether DoS contractors providing armoring services to the Department comply with contract terms and conditions.
<i>Audit of Property Accountability at the Baghdad Diplomatic Support Center in Iraq</i>	To 1) follow-up to a June 2014 DoS OIG report on property accountability in Iraq; and 2) determine the extent to which the Department’s and U.S. Mission Iraq’s policies, procedures, controls, and personnel were in place and operating as intended to ensure property was accounted for properly.

Project Title	Objective
<i>Audit of the Antiterrorism Assistance Program in Countries under the DoS Bureaus of Near Eastern Affairs and South and Central Asian Affairs–Iraq</i>	To determine the extent to which the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism implementing antiterrorism programs in selected countries within the Middle East and South and Central Asia 1) developed specific, measurable, and outcome-oriented goals and objectives; and 2) developed and implemented an evaluation process to assess host country performance. This portion of the audit will focus on programs implemented in Iraq.
<i>Audit of Baghdad Life Support Services Food Safety</i>	To determine whether the Baghdad Life Support Services risk areas in food operations such as cost, food handling, and safety meet the contract requirements of the Federal Acquisition Regulations, Foreign Affairs Manual, and Foreign Affairs Handbook.
<i>Audit of New Consulate Construction–Erbil, Iraq</i>	To determine whether the Bureau of Overseas Building Operations has effective quality assurance processes in place to ensure that the contractor builds the Erbil Consulate to the specifications agreed to in the contract.
<i>Audit of the Egypt Fuel Acquisition and Distribution</i>	To determine whether 1) fuel acquisition, storage, and distribution are performed in accordance with contract terms and Federal regulations; and 2) the DoS is adhering to policies and procedures to ensure the safety and security of post personnel.
<i>Audit of Turkey Fuel Acquisition and Distribution</i>	To determine whether 1) fuel acquisition, storage, and distribution are performed in accordance with contract terms and Federal regulations; and 2) the DoS is adhering to policies and procedures to ensure the safety and security of post personnel.
<i>Inspection of the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor</i>	To inspect the overall programs and operations of the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor.
<i>Follow-up Review of DoS Oversight Assistance Provided in Syria</i>	To determine whether the DoS implemented actions to address the deficiencies identified in the prior OIG report.
<i>Audit of Grants and Cooperative Agreements to Counter Violent Extremism in the Middle East</i>	To determine whether the DoS has 1) developed goals and objectives for its strategy to counter violent extremism; and 2) monitored funds provided to support those objectives.
<i>Audit of Iraq’s Post-Conflict Development and Sustainment</i>	To determine whether the DoS has policies in place to ensure that its post-conflict foreign assistance program in Iraq are sustained.
<i>Inspection of DoS Governance and Stabilization Programs in Iraq and Syria Funded under the Further Continuing and Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017</i>	To determine whether the DoS has been able to deploy funds made available under the Further Continuing and Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017, to support governance and stabilization efforts in Iraq and Syria.

Project Title	Objective
<i>Audit of Embassy Baghdad Power Plant Construction Cost Increases</i>	To determine the reasons for cost increases for the construction of the power plant in Baghdad, whether cost increases were supported with required documentation, and whether the departmental oversight and management of the project complied with DoS guidance.
<i>Audit of Property Accountability at the Baghdad Diplomatic Support Center in Iraq</i>	A follow-up to a June 2014 DoS OIG report on property accountability in Iraq. The objectives of the audit will be to determine the extent to which the Department's and U.S. Mission Iraq's policies, procedures, controls, and personnel were in place and operating as intended to ensure property was accounted for properly.
NAVAL AUDIT SERVICE	
<i>Department of the Navy Financial Data Reported for Overseas Contingency Operations</i>	To verify the accuracy of the Department of the Navy's obligations and disbursements supporting overseas contingency operations as reported in the <i>Cost of War</i> report.
U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Audit of the USAID Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance's Oversight During a Humanitarian Crisis</i>	To examine the roles of the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance and its independent offices in conducting oversight and their effectiveness at monitoring and addressing program implementation.
<i>Audit of USAID/Iraq's Stabilization Activities Implemented by United National Development Programme</i>	To determine the extent has USAID conducted oversight of its stabilization projects in Iraq.

Other Planned OIR-Related Oversight Projects

The DHS OIG has 20 planned projects and activities evaluating DHS's effort to protect the homeland against terrorist activities. While DHS OIG efforts are focused more broadly than OIR, many of these DHS OIG projects relate to the U.S. efforts to counter ISIS.

Treasury OIG has one planned project, which focuses on the Department of the Treasury's programs to disrupt ISIS's finances.

Table 9.

Other Planned Oversight Projects, as of September 30, 2017

Project Title	Objective
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY	
<i>Audit of DHS Air Support in the Rio Grande Valley</i>	To determine whether the U.S. Customs and Border Protection receives required air support.
<i>Review of U.S. Customs and Border Protection Holding Facilities</i>	To 1) determine the effectiveness of U.S. Customs and Border Protection holding facilities; and 2) assess whether these facilities are a good use of U.S. taxpayer money.
<i>Audit of U.S. Customs and Border and Protection Law Enforcement Intelligence Enterprise</i>	To determine the effectiveness of U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Law Enforcement Intelligence Enterprise, which serves as a border security partnership that connects the law enforcement and intelligence communities. Also, determine if this duplicates the efforts of DHS joint task forces.
<i>Audit of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Global Supply Chain Activities</i>	To determine the effectiveness of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's efforts to protect the global supply chain from exploitation and reduce its vulnerability to disruption.
<i>Audit of U.S. Customs and Border Protection Cargo Examinations System</i>	To determine the effectiveness of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's targeting system for examinations of cargo entering the United States.
<i>U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Deportation Oversight and Management—Transportation Integration</i>	To determine whether the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Air Operations Division is prepared to effectively and efficiently meet any impact of the potential surge in immigrant deportations.
<i>U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Detention Facilities—Management, Oversight, and Coordination with U.S. Customs and Border Protection</i>	To determine whether the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement conducts proper management and oversight of detention facilities to ensure it can meet any impact of a potential surge in immigrant detainees and that it effectively coordinates with the U.S. Customs and Border Protection in the transfer and handling of immigrant detainees.
<i>Coordination with the Department of Agriculture for Protecting U.S. Food, Agriculture, and Veterinary Systems against Terrorism and Other Events</i>	To determine the extent to which the DHS has implemented effective coordination with the Department of Agriculture to protect U.S. food, agriculture, and veterinary systems against terrorism and other high-consequence events that may pose a risk to homeland security.

Project Title	Objective
<i>DHS Domestic Nuclear Detection Office’s Efforts to Protecting the Nation’s Nuclear Facilities</i>	To determine whether the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office has reviewed the security of the Nation’s nuclear facilities to ensure that they are maintained adequately to deter and prevent nuclear terrorism.
<i>DHS Domestic Nuclear Detection Office’s Preparedness to Respond to a Nuclear Terrorism Event</i>	To determine whether the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office has tested the performance capabilities of emergency response groups under severe scenarios to ensure that they are sufficient to prevent and respond to nuclear terrorism.
<i>Science and Technology Oversight of Office of National Laboratories</i>	To determine whether DHS Office of Science and Technology has effectively managed the Office of National Laboratories activities to improve operations and advance research in support of homeland security.
<i>Review of the U.S. Secret Service Technical Development and Mission Support Program</i>	To determine whether the U.S. Secret Service Office of Technical Development and Mission Support program adequately supports the agency’s goal to enhance technology development.
<i>Federal Air Marshal Service–International Flight Operations</i>	To evaluate the methodology for Federal Air Marshal International flight coverage and the capabilities for interdicting improvised explosive devices.
<i>Transportation Security Administration Global Strategies</i>	To determine whether the Transportation Security Agency’s Office of Global Strategies is properly positioned and organized to successfully accomplish its mission.
<i>Transportation Security Administration Canine Testing</i>	To conduct covert testing to determine whether the Transportation Security Agency’s Canine Detection Program effectively identifies threat items before entering the sterile area of U.S. airports.
<i>U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Removal Strategy</i>	To determine the effectiveness of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s Enforcement and Removal Operations’ strategy.
<i>Controls Over U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services T and U Visas for Victims of Crimes</i>	To determine whether the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services’ controls for the processing of T and U Visas, 1) are sufficient to achieve goals and objectives; and 2) effectively detect and prevent fraud and abuse.
<i>U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services National Security Strategy</i>	To determine the effectiveness of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services in 1) meeting its goal to identify, address, and mitigate national security and fraud risks to the immigration system with emphasis on dual citizenship; and 2) addressing known risks such as Venezuelan “fraudulently bought” passports.

Project Title	Objective
<i>U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Affirmative Asylum Program</i>	To determine the effectiveness 1) of the asylum application processing and the extent of backlogs in the process; and 2) in establishing applicant identity and deporting failed asylum seekers.
<i>Transportation Worker Identification Credential</i>	To evaluate the Coast Guard's oversight of Transportation Worker Identification Credential enforcement for regulated vessels and facilities.
DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Audit of Treasury's Programs to Disrupt ISIS's Finances</i>	This effort covers projects the Treasury OIG will undertake to meet oversight responsibilities over Treasury's programs to disrupt ISIS's finances.





An Aviation Machinist's Mate works on an aircraft aboard the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz in the Arabian Gulf. (U.S. Navy photo)

APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

Methodology for Preparing Lead IG Quarterly Report

This report is issued pursuant to sections 2, 4, and 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978, which requires that the designated Lead IG provide a quarterly report, available to the public, on an overseas contingency operation. The DoD Inspector General is the designated Lead Inspector General for OIR. The DoS Inspector General is the Associate Lead Inspector General for OIR. This report contains information from the three Lead IG agencies—DoD OIG, DoS OIG, and USAID OIG—as well as from partner oversight agencies. This unclassified report covers the period from July 1 through September 30, 2017.

To fulfill its congressional mandate to produce a quarterly report on OIR, the Lead IG gathers data and information from Federal agencies and open sources. Data and information used in this report are attributed to their source in endnotes to the text or notes to the tables and figures. Except for references to Lead IG and oversight partner agency audits, inspections, evaluations, or investigations in the report, the Lead IG has not independently verified and assessed all the data included in this report. The humanitarian assistance section is based on public UN documents, and information provided by USAID and the DoS.

Data Call

Each quarter, the Lead IG agencies direct a series of questions, or data calls, to agencies about their programs and operations related to OIR. The Lead IG agencies use the information provided by their respective agencies for quarterly reports and to determine where to conduct future audits and evaluations.

The agencies that responded to the data call for this quarter included the following:

- Department of Defense
- Department of State
- U.S. Agency for International Development
- Department of Homeland Security OIG
- Department of Justice OIG
- Department of the Treasury OIG

Open-Source Research

This report also draws on current, publicly available information from reputable sources. Sources used in this report include the following:

- Information publicly released by U.S. agencies
- Congressional testimony
- Press conferences, especially DoD and DoS Briefings
- UN (and relevant branches)
- Reports issued by non-governmental or research organizations
- Media reports

Materials collected through open source research also provide information to describe the status of OIR, and help the Lead IG agencies assess information provided in their respective agency data call. However, in light of the operational realities and dynamic nature of OIR, the Lead IG agencies have limited time and ability to test, verify, and independently assess the assertions made by these agencies or open sources. This is particularly true where the Lead IG agencies have not yet provided oversight of these assertions through audits, inspections, or evaluations.

Report Production

The Lead IG is responsible for assembling and producing this report. The DoD OIG coordinates with the DoS OIG and the USAID OIG, which draft sections of the report related to the activities of their agencies. Each Lead IG agency participates in reviewing and editing the entire quarterly report.

The DoD OIG, DoS OIG, and USAID OIG provide the agencies who have responded to the data call with two opportunities to verify and comment on the content of the report. During the first review, agencies are asked to correct any inaccuracies and provide additional documentation. The Lead IG incorporates agency comments, where appropriate, and sends the report back to the agencies for a final review for accuracy. Each OIG coordinates the review process with its own agency.



The aircraft carrier USS Nimitz transits the Arabian Gulf in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. (U.S. Navy photo)

APPENDIX B

Department of Justice Prosecutions

Since 2013, Federal prosecutors have publicly charged approximately 135 individuals, in more than 35 districts, for foreign terrorist fighter, homegrown violent extremism, or ISIS-related conduct. This number includes approximately 90 FTF-related cases and approximately 35 HVE-related cases to date. DoJ prosecutions resulted in people being sentenced, convicted, or pleading guilty during the reporting. Examples from DoJ are:

- On July 6, 2017, Aaron Travis Daniels pleaded guilty to attempting to provide material support to ISIS. Daniels was arrested on November 7, 2016, as he attempted to leave Columbus, Ohio, with the intent to join ISIS in Libya. Daniels faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison.
- On July 24, 2017, John T. Booker, Jr., was sentenced to 30 years in prison for attempting to detonate a vehicle bomb on the Fort Riley military base near Manhattan, Kansas. On February 3, 2016, Booker pleaded guilty to one count of attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction and one count of attempted destruction of government property by fire or explosion.
- On August 2, 2017, Terrence J. McNeil was sentenced to 20 years in prison for soliciting the murder of members of the U.S. military. McNeil pleaded guilty earlier this year to five counts of solicitation to commit a crime of violence and five counts of making threatening interstate communications.
- On August 16, 2017, Lionel Nelson Williams pleaded guilty to attempting to provide material support to ISIS. In October and November 2016, Williams sent money to a person he believed was collecting money for ISIS to purchase weapons and ammunition for ISIS fighters. Williams also posted content on social media indicating his support for ISIS and attacks targeting police officers, military, and armed civilians. Williams faces a statutory maximum of 20 years in prison.
- On September 6, 2017, Keonna Thomas was sentenced to eight years of imprisonment for attempting to provide material support to ISIS. On September 20, 2016, Thomas pleaded guilty to knowingly and intentionally attempting to provide material support and resources, including herself as personnel, to ISIS.

APPENDIX C

Treasury's Actions Against Terrorist Finances

The Department of the Treasury has global terrorism authorities to target activities of extremist groups, including ISIS. Treasury's Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence and Office of Foreign Assets Control disrupt the ability of terrorist organizations to fund their operations.

Treasury officials reported the following events that took place this quarter:

- On July 21, Treasury designated Malik Ruslanovich Barkhanoev as a Specifically Designated Global Terrorist pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13224.¹ Treasury designated Barkhanoev for acting for or on behalf of ISIS. In 2015, he publicly announced fighting alongside ISIS. Barkhanoev originally traveled to Syria through Turkey and attended a terrorist training camp. After completing his training, Barkhanoev joined an ISIS group in Syria. In 2015, Barkhanoev publicly announced that he was fighting alongside ISIS and was based in the Syrian city of Manbij.
- On August 29, 2017, Treasury designated Salim Mustafa Muhammad al-Mansur (Mansur), an ISIS finance emir, as a Specifically Designated Global Terrorist pursuant to E.O. 13224 for acting for or on behalf of ISIS. Mansur's involvement with ISIS and its predecessor, al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), dates back to 2009 when he was an AQI commander involved in fundraising activities to support terrorism in Iraq. Between 2014 and 2015, Mansur was involved in moving hundreds of thousands of Iraqi dinars to ISIS and laundered and transferred money on behalf of ISIS. Starting in 2016, he was responsible for selling crude oil that ISIS extracted from oil fields in Iraq and Syria. As of early 2017, Mansur was an ISIS finance emir for Mosul who had moved to Turkey.



An F-15E Strike Eagle takes off from an undisclosed location in support of OIR. (U.S. Air Force photo)

ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

	Definition
AQI	Al Qaeda in Iraq
ASCA	Acquisition and Cross-Serving Agreement
CR	Continuing Resolution
CTIP	Combating Trafficking in Persons
CTS	Counter Terrorism Service (Iraqi)
DCIS	Defense Criminal Investigative Service
DHS	U.S. Department of Homeland Security
dinar	Currency of Iraq, issued by the Central Bank of Iraq
DoD OIG	Department of Defense Office of the Inspector General
DoJ	U.S. Department of Justice
DoS OIG	Department of State Office of Inspector General
ERD	Emergency Response Division (Iraqi)
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FFP	U.S. Aid for International Development, Office of Food for Peace
FFS	Funding Facility for Stabilization
FinCEN	Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (Treasury)
FY	Fiscal Year
GAO	Government Accountability Office
HTS	Hayat Tahrir al Sham
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IED	Improvised explosive device
IG	Inspector General
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISF	Iraqi Security Forces
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
KDP	Kurdish Democratic Party
KNC	Kurdish National Congress
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
Lead IG	Lead Inspector General

	Definition
Lead IG agencies	Refers to DoD OIG, DoS OIG, and USAID OIG agencies
OCO	Overseas Contingency Operation
OFDA	U.S. Aid for International Development, Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
OFS	Operation Freedom's Sentinel
OIG	Office of Inspector General
OIR	Operation Inherent Resolve
ONE	Operation Noble Eagle
OUSD	Office of Under Secretary of Defense
PJAK	Party for a Free Life in Kurdistan
PKK	Kurdistan Workers' Party (Turkish)
PRM	Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
PUK	Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
PYD	Democratic Union Party
SOA	Strategic Oversight Area
SDF	Syrian Democratic Forces
Treasury	U.S. Department of the Treasury
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
USAID OIG	United States Agency for International Development Office of Inspector General
U.S. Centcom	U.S. Central Command
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
YPG	Kurdish People's Protection Units

ENDNOTES

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A Syrian Arab trainee fires his rifle at a marksmanship range in northern Syria. (U.S. Army photo)

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